

AMERICAN SOCIALISM
OF THE
PRESENT DAY

JESSIE WALLACE HUGHAN



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AMERICAN SOCIALISM OF THE
PRESENT DAY

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BY
JESSIE WALLACE HUGHAN, PH.D.

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY
JOHN SPARGO

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MY MOTHER

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INTRODUCTION

IN the following pages the author, Miss Hughan, makes what I venture to predict will be widely and generally recognized as a very valuable contribution to the literature of Socialism. I regard it as a privilege and a pleasure to recommend it to all those whose interest in the subject has led them to the point where they desire a handy and reliable descriptive survey of the organized Socialist movement in this country.

In view of the phenomenal growth of the political Socialist movement, and the amazing progress of Socialist sentiment in the country, it is remarkable that no such survey has hitherto existed for the guidance of the American student. Quite admirable studies of the Socialist movement in the United States have been written by foreign writers and published for European readers. Notable among such studies are those by the German writer, A. Sartorius von Waltershausen, and the Italian writer, S. Cognetti de Martiis. A quarter of a century has elapsed since Prof. Richard T. Ely's well known book, "The Labor Movement in America," appeared. It is, therefore, quite out of date, and useless as a description of the present-day movement. Professor Ely's book treated of the American labor movement in general, and not of Socialism exclusively. It had the

great merit, however, of being the first attempt to give an intelligent and reliable sketch of the history of Socialism in this country. In the modern Socialist library its place has been taken by my friend Mr. Hillquit's scholarly "History of Socialism in the United States."

The value of Mr. Hillquit's work to the student of American Socialism cannot be overestimated. It is indispensable. But it is not, and was not intended to be, a survey of the contemporary Socialist movement. The reader seeking a descriptive account of the movement, the political organization and its many tributaries, a guide book enabling him to understand the methods of the Socialists, their numerous controversies and divisions, has hitherto sought in vain.

This, then, is the gap in the literature of Socialism which Miss Hughan's book is intended to fill. Her warm sympathy so finely tempered by her critical spirit, enabling her to see both the noble and the ignoble in just perspective, makes her a trustworthy guide through the labyrinthian paths which confront the serious student of American Socialism as it is to-day. She gives a bird's-eye view of the movement, sketches the political organization, noting its weak points as well as its strong ones; problems in theory and tactics are discussed with candor and discrimination, and the position of the leading spokesmen of the movement stated in their own words or impartial condensations of them. Thus the student who wants to understand the issues involved in the constant and often bitter conflict that is being waged between the so-called "Opportunist Socialist," on the one hand, and the so-called "Revolutionary Socialist," upon

the other hand, is now provided with a convenient conspectus of the entire field of controversy.

While she has been remarkably successful in her effort to be impartial, it is very evident that Miss Hughan's sympathies are, upon the whole, with the "Opportunists" rather than with the "Revolutionists." I use these unfortunate and misleading terms in the sense in which they are commonly used in contemporary Socialist discussion, as described in the following pages, because they are so used, and not to endorse them. If by social revolution is meant a reality, rather than an abstract phrase, the "Opportunist" who works for some specific measure for the advancement of the workers' interests is a better "Revolutionist" than he who, calling himself a "Revolutionist" and using the term "Opportunist" to express contempt, shouts terrible phrases but declines to participate in the attempt to bring about the improvement of the lot of the workers because the specific measure aimed at will not, of itself, inaugurate the Coöperative Commonwealth.

It is hardly to be expected, therefore, that either the book itself or its author will completely escape Socialist criticism. I am satisfied, however, that the book will be welcomed by an overwhelming majority of the organized Socialists in the United States, and accepted as a faithful picture of the movement at this time of transition. Without assuming responsibility for all Miss Hughan's opinions, I have no hesitation in saying that I have found the book reliable and illuminating, and that I regard it as a trustworthy guide. It must at once take a place among the books that are really indispensable to the student of Socialism.

There has been much discussion during the last few years concerning the alleged decline of the influence of Marxian teachings upon the American Socialist movement. To that discussion the present volume is a noteworthy contribution. It brings into bold relief the fact that, while the movement is undoubtedly losing its dogmatic and sectarian character — imposed upon it, quite naturally, and unintentionally, by the German exiles who first propagated the teachings of Marx in this country — in its practice it is, through that very fact, becoming ever more Marxian in the sense that it follows the practical example of Marx himself.

It is my earnest hope that the book will command the large interest and circulation it merits. It will do much to promote an intelligent study of Socialism, and free the discussion of the subject from prejudice and the bitterness and misunderstanding which prejudice engenders.

JOHN SPARGO.

"NESTLEDOWN,"

Old Bennington, Vermont;

End of April, 1911.

AMERICAN SOCIALISM OF THE
PRESENT DAY

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

THAT Socialism is a force to be reckoned with is already a platitude. In England it is now, through the Labor Party, a factor in Parliament; in Belgium it is leading the people through the coöperative associations; in France¹ it has gained control over several important municipalities, and in Germany it is the faith of the party numerically strongest in the empire.²

Until seven years ago few Americans would acknowledge the presence of Socialism as an active force in this country. In 1904, however, we awoke to the realization that the Socialist Party vote (409,230) had increased more than 300% since the previous election (96,931 in 1900).³ That this gain was largely adventitious and due to the conservative character of the Democratic presidential candidate for that year was shown by the very slight increase recorded in 1908; yet the mere maintenance of its strength in the latter campaign (424,483)³ indicates that the Socialist Party of America had

¹ A. M. Simons, *Socialism in French Municipalities*, p. 7, *seq.*

² Hillquit, *Socialism in Theory and Practice*, p. 337.

³ S. P. Official Bulletin, May, 1909.

grown from a chance aggregation of the discontented into a permanent body. The local elections of 1909 showed in most cases a falling off from these figures; but in 1910 the sweeping Socialist victories in Milwaukee were followed by a national vote of 604,756,¹ with the election of the first Socialist, Victor Berger, of Wisconsin, to the Congress of the United States.

An even surer criterion of strength than the official vote is given in the dues-paying membership of the party, which increased from about 20,000 in 1903² to 41,479 in 1909,³ rising in 1910 to 58,011, a gain in one year of nearly 40%.⁴

Although few of us would state with President Hadley⁵ that Socialist views "are held to a greater or less extent by a large number of people, — perhaps a majority of voters in the United States," — it is patent to all that each year shows the steady spread of views now denominated as Socialist, as well as the entrenchment in hitherto conservative quarters of policies but lately classed under the Socialist category.

When we of America inquire, however, "What is Socialism?" we are confronted by a chaos of conflicting definitions. The word Socialist is applied indiscriminately to Roosevelt, Bryan, and Hearst, to the Western Federation of Miners, and to the over-sentimental Christian moralist.

In England the working-class movement has sprung up spontaneously as the outcome of immediate necessities, and has hitherto borne but slight

¹ Thompson, *The Rising Tide of Socialism*, p. 1.

² Hillquit, *History of Socialism*, p. 347.

³ S. P. Official Bulletin, February, 1910.

⁴ S. P. National Bulletin, January, 1911.

⁵ Hadley, *Education of the American Citizen*, p. 58.

relation to any self-conscious economic philosophy. The name Socialism, accordingly, is comparatively little used. It appears as an official title only in the Social-Democratic Party, and, while the Independent Labor Party is avowedly Socialist, its political activity, as well as that of the Fabian Society, is merged in that of the Labor Party. The tendency of English Socialism is, accordingly, to lay little stress upon party labels, and to discuss measures rather than systems.

On the continent of Europe, on the other hand, the philosophy of Socialism is, in most cases, older than the prevailing system of government. The theories promulgated by Marx and Engels have had sixty years of direct influence during which points of controversy might be threshed out, organization and tactics crystallized, and a scientific doctrine evolved.

In the United States there has been no continuous evolution of either measures or doctrine. The continental Socialism of the seventies, brought over by German immigrants, has had to be adapted to political, social, and economic conditions differing widely from those from which it sprang. As a result, there was until 1892 nothing that could properly be called an American Socialist party, and even now the current saying that Socialists are "of 57 varieties" reflects the prevalent impression, both popular and academic, as to American Socialism.

The question before us, then, is, first of all, — Does there exist, or to what extent does there exist, a consistent Socialist movement in the United States? Only after such a movement is clearly identified can we proceed to inquire, — What are its principles and

tactics, its strength and its weakness, at the present time?

The Socialist parties of the world have maintained since 1900 an International Socialist Bureau, composed of two representatives of the organized movement in each affiliated country.¹ There are two American organizations represented in this Bureau, the Socialist Party and the Socialist Labor Party. Since both bodies have thus at present an accredited place in the Socialist movement of the world, they must be taken, through their official utterances, as the spokesmen of American Socialism. The Socialist Party received in 1908 a vote of 424,483, as compared with the Socialist Labor Party vote of about 15,000, the latter having fallen to this figure from 82,204 in 1898.² As it is evident that the Socialist Party represents the majority of American Socialists, its utterances will, in general, be taken as typical, mention being made of the Socialist Labor Party only in matters wherein the two differ materially.

First of such utterances are the national, state, and municipal platforms, which are deliberate declarations of principle, adopted by a convention of elected delegates and confirmed by referendum of the party. While the authority of a platform would at first sight appear conclusive on a given point, it must be remembered, on the other hand, that the platform is confessedly a campaign document designed for the conversion of the public. As far as may be possible, we must interpret such authorities by the declarations of Socialists among themselves and their methods

¹ Hillquit, *Socialism in Theory and Practice*, p. 355.

² Hillquit, *History of Socialism*, p. 340.

when outside the lime-light of the campaign. A second and most important source of information, accordingly, is afforded by the private official literature of the party. This consists of, first, the weekly bulletin furnished to members of the National Committee and containing the discussions of that body, second, the Monthly Bulletin, issued since 1904 without expense to members of the party, and, third, such occasional publications as may be issued by the authority of the organization.

Besides the distinctly official sources mentioned, careful account must be taken of the utterances of the Socialist press, of the books circulated by the party, and the party leaders. A word is necessary regarding these classifications.

Although the Socialist Labor Party possesses an official daily, *The People*, of New York, the Socialist Party has refused to designate any organ aside from its own bulletin.¹ The party has at different times given definite support to the *New York Call*, *Chicago Daily Socialist*, and *Milwaukee Social-Democratic Herald*.² Says the National Secretary of the party, however, "The only thing that would stand absolutely to the test as an official utterance of the party is the constitution, the platform, and such resolutions as are finally adopted by national party referendum."

As the category of Socialist books is proverbially an elusive one, I will quote chiefly from the list recommended in the study course of the National Executive Committee.³ To these may be added the

¹ S. P. Nat. Const., Art. V. Sec. 2.

² Nat. Weekly Bulletin, Mar. 7, July 23, 1907.

³ Books recommended by the Nat. Exec. Committee: *Theory — Socialism in Theory and Practice*, Hillquit; *Social Revolution*, Kautsky;

writings of the party leaders in general, and, if we wish to take a wider sweep, the books published and widely advertised by the Socialist coöperative publishing house of C. H. Kerr and Company, Chicago.

The acknowledgment of leadership is foreign to the principles of Socialism, which emphasizes the class rather than the individual, and economic rather than personal forces. Such hero worship as that of Lassalle by the German workers of the last generation is repudiated by American Socialists; and many of the internal polemics which appear to outsiders as serious dissensions are in reality merely a rough discipline administered to would-be leaders who forget their place as servants of the organization. The phenomenon of "personal following," conspicuous in the Socialist Labor Party, is rare in the Socialist Party, in which such men as Berger, Debs, and Hillquit are utilized by the same constituencies as organizer, agitator, or theoretician, according to their respective abilities.

Even with these reservations, the task of naming the party leaders is obviously not a matter for personal judgment. The Socialist is unavoidably biassed by local prejudice or his own position towards party tactics; the non-Socialist can hardly keep from taking as representative those Socialists who may either give consistency to a preconceived idea of the party or who happen to have challenged

Economic Foundations of Society, Loria. *The Development of Socialism* — Socialism, Utopian and Scientific, Engels. *Economics* — The People's Marx, Deville; Socialism, Spargo. *Special Problems of Socialism* — Woman, Bebel; The American Farmer, Simons; The City for the People, Parsons; Collectivism and Industrial Evolution, Vandervelde. *Tactics and Methods* — Socialists at Work, Hunter; Constructive Socialism, Thompson. *History* — History of Socialism, Kirkup; History of Socialism in the United States, Hillquit. (S. P. Official Bulletin, September, 1909.)

his attention by their moderation on the one hand or their sensationalism on the other. The object of the present study, however, is the investigation of American Socialism as an actual and entire movement, scientific or unscientific, consistent or inconsistent, as it may prove to be; accordingly, only those persons in general will be taken as party spokesmen who have been chosen by the rank and file as their representatives. These will include in the present inquiry only those men and women who hold, or have recently held, the highest offices voted for by the party, — namely, the seven members of the National Executive Committee, the National Secretary, the Representatives in the International Socialist Bureau, the candidates for President and Vice-President of the United States, and the National Committeemen, numbering 69 in 1911.¹ We may add also those who hold the highest public offices to which Socialists have yet been elected, those of State Senator, Mayor of a municipality, and U. S. Congressman. It must always be borne in mind that the leaders and writers above referred to are only the mouthpieces of American Socialists. The movement is of the working-class, and as such is largely inarticulate. Its candidates and committeemen are seldom typical wage-earners, but rather intellectual proletarians or labor unionists who have risen out of the ranks, men possessing leisure for organizing and facilities for expression. The attitude of the rank and file itself is registered partly by its choice among these leaders, still more by its votes on individual referendums and local decisions; if we would ascertain even more closely this point of view, we shall have to venture

¹ S. P. Official Bulletin, January, 1911.

on the always doubtful ground of personal impressions, those of the writer gathered from public and private meetings and talks, and those of persons of larger experience furnished by them in conversations and correspondence. Where recourse is had to this method, accuracy is not pretended, but, here as elsewhere, impressions must sometimes serve to supplement exact observation.

Scattered over the country are numerous non-official Socialist organizations, — represented in New York by the Collectivist Society, the Intercollegiate Socialist Society, the Rand School of Social Science, and the Socialist Sunday Schools, — together with such labor groups as the Western Federation of Miners and the Industrial Workers of the World, whose Socialist sympathies are more or less avowed. All of these come into frequent association with the Socialist Party, and influence and are influenced by it. As much may also be said of many foreign leaders and organizations, and of American Socialists and sympathizers outside the party lines.

In the same way that the object of this description forbids the placing of emphasis upon Socialist party members, perhaps well-known to the public, who have failed to attain places of authority by the vote of the party, so also a hiatus may be noted in the passing over of prominent Socialists who are as yet unaffiliated with either of the Socialist parties. The writer is quite free from the intention of disputing the claim of the latter class to the name of Socialists. Fortunately for the present investigation, however, the Socialist Party of America is a very definite body, and, if we would avoid the vagueness which has so often defeated similar inquiry, it will be necessary

for us to keep to its boundaries, referring to the persons and organizations just mentioned only in so far as they have affected the position of the party itself.

The present essay thus becomes largely a study of the Socialist Party of America at the present time, its official literature, its organization and decisions, and the views of its leaders as expressed in the party press and elsewhere. An endeavor will be made to outline the belief, demands, and methods of American Socialism, to show their relation to the theories of Marx, and finally, by estimating the elements of strength and weakness in the movement, to ascertain its status at present. In order to accomplish this purpose, there is need to precede the discussion with a brief outline of scientific or Marxian Socialism.

CHAPTER II

OUTLINE OF MARXIAN SOCIALISM

THE definition of Socialism is a rock upon which many discussions have been wrecked. The defects of the definitions current in continental Europe have been analyzed by Tugan-Baranowsky,¹ while the attempts of English economists are usually inferior even to these. Rae, in his test that Socialism always means the removal of one injustice by the infliction of a greater,² and Fawcett, — “Probably the best definition of Socialism is, that it enables a man to rely upon a society or a community for maintenance instead of upon his own individual efforts,”³ may be charged by Socialists with begging the question. When Cairnes calls it the invocation of state power for instant accomplishment of ideal schemes,⁴ the Socialist repudiates this characterization also on the ground that *instant accomplishment* is not essential to Socialism, and that it contemplates no *ideal scheme*, but an outcome of evolutionary forces.

The only fair method in examining a belief or policy is to accept the definition of its supporters; if other beliefs or practices can be proved necessary corollaries, or if the avowed adherents fail to live

¹ Der Moderne Sozialismus, p. 1, *seq.*

² Contemporary Socialism, p. 9; see also p. 11, 13, 14.

³ Op. cit., p. 105.

⁴ Op. cit., p. 316, note.

up to their official doctrines, these points must be noticed later. For practical purposes then we may take the definition of the American Socialists as expressed by Morris Hillquit:

“Socialism advocates the transfer of ownership in the social tools of production — the land, factories, machinery, railroads, mines, etc. — from the individual capitalist to the people, to be operated for the benefit of all.”¹

While Socialism proper is synonymous with the economic and political program indicated above, it may be completely understood only when viewed in its broader sense, as, first, an economic belief, second, a plan or prophecy for a future commonwealth, and, third, a working method for the attainment of this commonwealth.

To the Utopians of the early nineteenth century belongs the credit or discredit of founding Socialism as a humanitarian movement, but modern Socialists claim that only with the work of Karl Marx and Frederick Engels in the forties did Socialism become a scientific and consistent world movement. The utterances of these two pioneers, especially as expressed in their joint *Communist Manifesto* and in Marx's *Capital*, have for a half-century formed the Socialist “guide of faith and practice.” In recent years the Revisionists have suggested modifications of these doctrines, but still, in the words of Professor Veblen, “The socialism that inspires hopes and fears to-day is of the school of Marx. No one is seriously apprehensive of any other so-called socialistic movement, and no one is seriously concerned to criticise

¹ Socialism in Theory and Practice, p. 11.

or refute the doctrines set forth by any other school of socialists.”¹

The Marxian doctrine includes a theory of history and a system of pure economics, with deductions from both as to the present state of society. These two may stand or fall separately, as there is nothing in common between them except that Marx happened to originate both.²

The first of these, the theory of the economic interpretation of history, is stated thus by Engels:

“In every historical epoch, the prevailing mode of economic production and exchange, and the social organization necessarily following from it, form the basis upon which is built up, and from which alone can be explained, the political and intellectual history of that epoch.”³

As Engels does not fail to state, the proposition was originally formulated by Marx. A portion of Marx’s explanation is here given:⁴

“In the social production which men carry on, they enter into definite relations that are indispensable and independent of their will; these relations of production correspond to a definite stage of development of their material powers of production. The sum total of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society — the real foundation, on which rise legal and political superstructures, and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness. The mode of production in material life

¹ Quarterly Journal of Economics, Vol. 21, p. 299-300.

² Seligman, Economic Interpretation of History, p. 105.

³ Com. Manifesto, p. 6.

⁴ Contribution to Critique of Pol. Econ., p. 11-12.

determines the general character of the social, political, and spiritual processes of life. It is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence, but, on the contrary, their social existence determines their consciousness. . . . No social order ever disappears before all the productive forces, for which there is room in it, have been developed; and new higher relations of production never appear before the material conditions of their existence have matured in the womb of the old society."

The economic interpretation of history becomes a Socialist doctrine when it is applied as follows to the analysis of the present social system.

Ancient and mediaeval society were the outcome respectively of classical and feudal economic conditions. The latter régime was characterized by individual production on a small scale, usually for the immediate consumption of the producer or his feudal lord, but with the beginning of commodity production on a gradually enlarging basis. As the result of the industrial revolution, the mediaeval system was transformed into that of capitalism; and the bourgeois or capitalist structure of society now appeared, with the consequent institutions of the bourgeois state, church, family, and moral code.

As machine industry develops in bourgeois society, the means of production, being now concentrated into great factories, become no longer individual, but social in character, and production is now a social act. The new relations of production thus brought about constitute the economic structure of society, upon which must rise its political and legal superstructures; accordingly our government and laws must inevitably be modified in harmony with the

social mode of production, — that is in the direction of the next, or Socialist form of society.

After the economic interpretation of history has thus been applied to a prophecy of Socialism, Engels employs the dialectic method in an analysis of the contradictions in the capitalist system by which the new society is to be evolved.

While the present mode of production is becoming more and more social in character, the mode of exchange, being still based upon the forms of appropriation of the previous system, is individual in nature. The capitalist, as the owner of the means of production, still appropriates the products as commodities. There is thus a fundamental contradiction in industry, in that the social product is appropriated by the individual capitalist.¹

Furthermore, while the form of appropriation remains the same as in mediaeval society, its character has changed materially, since the owner of the means of production has the title to what is no longer his own individual product, but the product of others, the wage-laborers whom he has hired. An antagonism thus arises between the proletariat and the capitalist class, which constitutes the modern manifestation of the class struggle, that conflict which has furnished the moving force of all recorded history.

As industry progresses, capitalists are compelled by competition to introduce labor-saving machinery, throwing out of employment more and more wage-earners. Those laborers who are unable to make the new adaptation or who cannot be absorbed to supply the resulting demand for a cheapened product tend to form an industrial reserve army, which fur-

¹ Engels, *Socialism, Utopian and Scientific*, p. 55, 83, etc.

nishes to the capitalist a force to be drawn upon in busy seasons, as well as a weapon for keeping down to a low level the wages of the actual workers. The power of capital thus increases with the development of technical production, while the lot of the worker becomes more and more unbearable because of his growing dependence upon capital and the increasing exploitation which, even under conditions of rising wages, serves to widen the social gulf between the two classes.¹ Thus the class struggle grows ever more intense, and "what the bourgeoisie produces, above all, are its own grave-diggers."²

The necessity of continually increasing production under the capitalist system, coupled with the contradiction between social production and individual appropriation, brings about a constant tendency to plethora, which the bourgeoisie seek to meet by an extension of markets. Owing to the limitations of this remedy and to the anarchy of production that is essential to the capitalist system, the plethora assumes the form of the industrial crisis, occurring periodically, during which ³ "the mode of production is in rebellion against the mode of exchange."

At each crisis the industrial structure is strained more seriously, with the result that the capitalist class is forced gradually to recognize the social character of production by the concentration of industry in the trust and finally the state-owned enterprise. The functions of the bourgeoisie being now performed by salaried employes, it becomes a superfluous class.

As the contradiction between socialized produc-

¹ Marx, *Wage-Labor and Capital*, p. 24.

² *Communist Manifesto*, p. 23. ³ Engels, *op. cit.*, p. 65.

tion and individual ownership tends on the one hand to range the exploited proletariat in an ever fiercer class struggle against the exploiting capitalists, and on the other to force the complete socialization of industry in the trust and government ownership, the contradiction at last brings forth its own solution, in the seizure of public power by the proletariat and the transformation of the means of production at their hands into public property.¹

The foregoing brief outline contains the three cardinal points of scientific socialism, namely, — the economic interpretation of history, the class struggle, and the inevitable break-down of capitalism. If we add to these the contention, shared in some degree by all reformers, that existing society contains within itself serious evils, we have the essentials of the Marxian belief.

The theory of pure economics, which Marx worked out in *Capital* and employed to support the conclusions of his interpretation of history, has been taken by many critics as the scientific foundation of Socialism. That it should be regarded merely as supplementary, however, and as a contribution of Marx the scholar rather than Marx the revolutionist, is shown by the fact that long before the publication of *Capital* (1867) or of the *Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy* (1859) the Socialist movement had become articulate in the *Communist Manifesto* (1848) which makes no mention of the surplus value theory, but stands squarely upon the economic interpretation of history and the class struggle.² “Marx never based his communistic de-

¹ Engels, op. cit., p. 86.

² Liebknecht, Karl Marx, p. 25, 33, 38.

mands upon this argument,¹ but upon the inevitable breakdown of capitalist production.”

The doctrine of surplus value, by which Marx works out deductively the conclusions as to capitalist production drawn elsewhere from historical interpretation, is based logically upon the explicit and implicit teachings of Smith, Malthus, and Ricardo, more particularly the labor theory of value put forth by the writer last named. Marx makes frequent reference to these authors, as well as to Petty and other economists immediately preceding them, and vigorously criticises Ricardo's writings regarding certain metaphysical distinctions.²

Value, according to *Capital*, is the crystallization of labor, and the value embodied in an article is the exact equivalent of the labor it represents. Here is meant not the labor of a particular individual, as that may be feeble or otherwise unproductive, but “socially necessary” labor, — namely, the average human labor required to reproduce the article at the given time and place.³ Wealth is that which has value, but capital is wealth used in the production of more wealth only in a special sense, as will be seen later. Capital creates nothing of itself, for all it can do is to be exchanged or converted into machinery, raw material, and other aids to industry. In the former case, an equivalent is always rendered in an honest transaction, and so no value is added. In the latter, the value of the capital goes over into that of the machinery, which in turn is transferred eventually to the product; but, as it can give no more

¹ Engels, Preface to Marx's *Das Elend der Philosophie*, p. x.

² *Capital*, Vol. I. p. 14, note; p. 19, note; p. 52, notes, etc.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

value than the equivalent of the labor contained in it, its productivity then ceases, all further increase being due to labor alone.¹ Thus labor is rendered more efficient by the means of production. It is only in a roundabout way that capital brings wealth to its owner, namely, by being used to hire the labor-power of others.

As, owing to various causes detailed in the historical chapters of *Capital*, there are in modern society numbers of people forming the proletariat, a class without the necessary land, tools, and materials for production, forced to sell their labor-power for the means of subsistence, the capitalist can employ his wealth most advantageously.² First he buys with it the labor-power of certain workers; this labor-power being a commodity, its value is an equivalent for the socially necessary labor required to reproduce it, the value, that is, of the lowest means of subsistence on which the worker will consent to live and bring up children to replace himself.³ At this price, therefore, it is bought by the employer. If the full working time of a laborer were needed to produce the livelihood for himself and family, all would be simple; the value of his labor-power would go over into the product, the capitalist would sell it and recover his capital, but no profit would be made.⁴ Another circumstance, however, enters in. Owing to superior organization of labor, time-saving inven-

¹ *Capital*, Vol. I. p. 186; Le Rossignol inaccurately employs the point concerning exchange as a refutation of Marx, by stating that commerce does not create surplus value (Orthodox Socialism, p. 32); and even Hadley seems rather to follow the interpretation of Untermann than Marx himself in the statement, "The socialists are wrong in regarding trade as robbery" (Economics, p. 94, 96; see also Untermann, Marxian Economics, p. 77).

² *Capital*, Vol. I. p. 91 (Humboldt Ed.).

³ *Ibid.*, p. 92-93.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 107.

tions, and chance advantages, the subsistence of the working-class family can usually be produced in less than a full day; Marx takes as a hypothesis a half-day.¹ Instead of employing the worker for that half-day, however, and then dismissing him, the capitalist, who, having all the means of production, can dictate the terms, buys his labor-power for the whole working-day. Thus, after the laborer has replaced the value of his subsistence in, say, five hours, and, in perhaps two other hours, that embodied in the material and tools, he works yet another three hours to make a profit for the capitalist.²

This surplus labor time is the sole source of profit. Its proportion to the whole labor day increases gradually, as improvement cheapens the subsistence of the worker, or if, as sometimes happens, the standard at which the laborer will consent to live and replace himself is lowered. Furthermore, the employer may absolutely increase the surplus labor time by prolonging the labor day, or, what is the same thing, speeding up the machinery and the worker. Again, the cost of subsistence remaining the same, any advantage of production gained in a special industry or establishment will directly increase the profits in question until competitors shall enjoy the same advantage, since the average, rather than the actual labor involved, still continues to measure the specific value of the product.³ Thus the profit of the capitalist is solely surplus value gained by the exploitation of the worker; and capital, in the So-

¹ Capital (Humboldt Edition), Vol. I. p. 94.

² Ibid., p. 109.

³ Wage Labor and Capital, p. 25-26; instead of directly combating the surplus value theory here, President Hadley takes issue with the apparent implication that inefficiency tends to benefit the working class (Economics, p. 309).

cialist sense, signifies only that portion of wealth that brings gain by this exploitation.

“Capital is not a mere thing. It is fundamentally an economic relationship between an exploiting and an exploited class.”¹

While in the economic interpretation of history as outlined by Engels the crisis is ascribed generally to the anarchy of capitalistic production and to the acceleration of industry which necessitates expanding markets, a more elaborate special cause was worked out by Rodbertus and a little later by Marx himself.² As industry progresses, the cost of living tends to diminish, and, as shown above, the actual or subsistence rate of wages tends to grow smaller; moreover, the increasing use of machinery, by allowing the employment of women and children and augmenting the reserve army, forces actual wages downward toward this natural level. Accordingly, the rate of surplus value increases; wages tend to grow proportionately smaller, and, even though the rate of profit may decrease, profits as a whole become proportionately greater. The wage-earners, being in the majority, constitute the great market for the product of industry, but, as their proportionate share grows smaller, their demand must decrease with it. As the small body of capitalists, on the other hand, find their profits increasing, they tend, after devoting a portion to articles of luxury, to reinvest the surplus, thus producing more and more of the commodities for which the demand, as governed by the propertyless masses, is decreasing. This over-pro-

¹ Untermann, p. 28, Marxian Economics.

² Rodbertus, op. cit., p. 127 *seq.*; see also preface by John B. Clark, p. 9.

duction and under-consumption can end only in an industrial crisis, which, by curtailing production for a time, allows the demand slowly to overtake the supply, when the process begins again.¹

In the same way that the surplus value theory brings support to the doctrine of the class struggle by showing that the economic interests of capitalist and laborer are inherently opposed, the Marxian theory of crises gives strength to the expectation of catastrophe by pointing out an irresistible force undermining the structure of capitalist world-industry. The deductions from historical interpretation, accordingly, are strongly reenforced by those of Marx's pure economics, with the result that, although the latter is but an unessential accompaniment of scientific socialism, this movement is commonly treated as if dependent upon Marx's doctrine *in toto* rather than based, as it actually is, upon the economic interpretation of history with its Socialist corollaries, the class struggle and the downfall of bourgeois society.

The second division of Socialist doctrine consists of a contemplated reorganization of society based on the collective ownership of the means of production, and it is because the Socialists of the world are bending their efforts to the ushering in of this "coöperative commonwealth" that Socialism is a present political issue. The one basic feature of this society belongs equally to the platforms of all Socialists and may be taken as the touchstone of Socialism, — namely, the destruction of exploitation by the collective ownership of the means of production, in order to establish a more equitable enjoyment of wealth. By Palgrave's definition:

¹ Marx, Wage-Labor and Capital, p. 32.

"Socialism implies that the individuals who make up society should in their collective capacity possess all the instruments of production and thus prevent the evils arising from the present industrial system,"¹ and, according to the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, "The Socialists propose that land and capital . . . should become the property of society and be managed by it for the general good."²

A comprehensive definition is Professor Seager's, — "The proposal to reorganize industrial society by transferring to the state, or its agent, the government, control over land and the instruments of production, which we have called capital goods, and by confining private property to consumer's goods."³

The program indicated in these definitions, and agreeing substantially with that of Hillquit previously quoted, constitutes Socialism proper, and its supporters, irrespective of their general philosophy, are Socialists.

Karl Marx himself dealt with this program in only the most general terms. While as an agitator and organizer he entered ardently into political and economic reform, his Socialist philosophy consisted in an analysis of what is, rather than a theory of what ought to be; and the Marxists after him have been not so much reformers propounding schemes for amelioration as analysts of existing economic tendencies and organizers of the proletariat in anticipation of the inevitable outcome.

Instead of laying down specifications for a future

¹ *Op. cit.*, Vol. III. p. 431.

² Vol. XXII. p. 206.

³ *Introduction to Economics*, p. 528.

society, accordingly, the Marxists have usually claimed that the evolutionary process cannot fail to adapt the world to the change and that it is not for one generation to make laws for the state of posterity. Any conceptions of the Socialist commonwealth in which they indulge are confessedly speculative and provisional. Furthermore, Marx dreams of two conditions of society, one for immediate adoption after the inevitable revolution and another to come about long afterwards, when humanity shall have been transformed by the new social order.¹

The *Communist Manifesto* is not wholly indefinite, however. From the vague and revolutionary program of "abolition of private property" and the conversion of capital "into common property, into the property of all members of society," it goes on to the statement that "the proletariat will use its political supremacy to wrest, by degrees, all capital from the bourgeoisie; to centralize all instruments of production in the hands of the state, i. e., of the proletariat organized as the ruling class; and to increase the total of productive forces as rapidly as possible."²

While all proposals for the ultimate Socialist society other than these broad statements are regarded as Utopian on the ground that the economic conditions of which they are to be the outcome have not yet appeared, the same criticism does not apply to the "immediate demands" of Socialism, in so far as these are dictated by forces already operative in industry. The *Communist Manifesto* therefore lays down as measures for the immediate economic

¹ Marx, On the Gotha Program, p. 649, quoted by Skelton, op. cit. p. 202.

² Com. Man., p. 24, 31.

strengthening of the working class the confiscation of rent and inheritances, the income tax, centralization of credit, communication, and transport, equal liability of all to labor, extension of state production, free education, and the abolition of child labor.¹ While this first sketch of modern Socialist demands leaves much to be inquired after, it is interesting to note how generally the same measures are included in the present day platforms.

The same attitude that kept the pioneers of scientific socialism from supplying details of the new social order prevented them from prescribing rules for its attainment. In the days of the *Manifesto*, Marx and Engels seemed to expect a violent revolution on the occasion of the final overthrow of capitalism; yet they urged the Communists, as the Socialists were then termed, to take part in the politics of their various countries, supporting "every revolutionary movement against the existing social and political order of things," — in France the Social Democrats of the period, in Switzerland the Radicals, and in Germany the bourgeoisie itself, "whenever it acts in a revolutionary way against the absolute monarchy, the feudal oligarchy, and the petty bourgeoisie."²

Later on these writers laid less and less stress upon the violence of the revolution, and the German leaders of the seventies and eighties conceived their task as merely to "agitate, educate, and organize" the proletarian forces for the somewhat indefinite crisis before them.³ For a long period, notwithstanding the *Communist Manifesto*, political activity in

¹ Com. Man., p. 32-33.

² Ibid., p. 31, 45.

³ Hunter, Socialists at Work, p. 154.

Germany, the seat of Marxism, was discouraged as a concession to the ruling aristocratic state, but gradually the organization came unavoidably to assume political responsibilities, and since 1887 the Social-Democrats of Germany have played a greater and greater part in parliamentary action.¹ The war-cry of "No Compromise" has for many years been the distinctive sign of the Marxist, as opposed to the Revisionist and Opportunist, but the question as to what constitutes compromise is as yet far from settled; and there is an evident tendency among the modern Marxists to mould their tactics more and more in accord with expediency, quoting in their support the example of Marx in the "International" and the attacks upon the doctrinaire attitude made by Engels in his later utterances.²

The Marxist weapons at present, then, are first the systematic education and organization of the workers, and second the ballot. The organization of labor in the economic field was to Marx of equal importance with political agitation, and his greatest practical efforts were thrown into the International Workingmen's Association, to some extent the fulfillment of the appeal of the *Communist Manifesto*, "which was not to be a fighting organization, but rather — so far as was possible under the conditions prevailing on the continent of Europe — a center for all endeavors pointing to the emancipation of the laboring class."³

The Marxian movement has, accordingly, always been consistently friendly towards the labor unions, the only differences of opinion on the matter being as

¹ Kampffmeyer, *Changes in Theory and Tactics*, p. 40, *seq.*

² Spargo, *Sidelights on Contemporary Socialism*, p. 144.

³ Liebknecht, *Karl Marx*, p. 37.

to the method of labor organization and the relative importance of political and industrial action. The Socialist unions in Germany to-day number 1,800,000 out of the whole trade union membership of 2,200,000, and the individual leaders of the workmen are almost invariably their leaders on the political field also.¹

Voluntary coöperatives were a generation ago associated with the non-Marxian rather than the Marxian Socialists. Of recent years, however, the coöperative movement in Belgium, Holland, and Germany as well, has come to be considered, along with that of organized labor, as the natural ally of political Socialism in the class struggle.²

Since an important part of the present study deals with an inquiry into the Marxist or contrary character of American Socialism, it has been necessary to enter into this sketch of the doctrines of Marx and Engels, commonly termed Marxian or scientific socialism. We must now touch with equal brevity upon the history of Socialism in the United States, its independent and contributed tendencies.

¹ See Kampffmeyer, p. 138, *seq.*

² *Ibid.*, p. 152, *seq.*

CHAPTER III

THE HISTORY OF SOCIALISM IN THE UNITED STATES ¹

FOR a large part of the nineteenth century, the United States was the happy hunting-ground of Socialist, or more properly Communist, experimenters. The movements of Owen, of Fourier, and of Cabet all bore their chief fruit on American soil, and up to the time of the Civil War the term Socialism conveyed the idea merely of Utopian communism. While several of these settlements, notably that of Brook Farm, numbered among their members men and women of the first rank in literature and social reform, they cannot be said to have left any real impress upon modern Socialism except in so far as the individual influence of these persons has permeated to some extent the thought of the American people.

The real beginnings of Socialism in the United States are to be found in two quarters far removed from the philosophic ease of the Fourierist intellectuals.

First of all, the exodus of German radicals culminating in the years after the uprising of 1848

¹ Morris Hillquit's History of Socialism in America has been used as the basis of this chapter, as far as the year 1903. For information as to the S. L. P. and the Industrial Workers of the World the writer is indebted to Dr. Frank Bohn.

could not fail to bring to America little knots of revolutionists such as that which formed about Marx and Engels in London. While the chief of these exiles in the United States was the non-Marxian Wilhelm Weitling, founder of the *Allgemeine Arbeiterbund* at Philadelphia in 1850, this period marks the beginning of Marxian Socialism in America, in the activity of Joseph Weydemeyer, who published for the first time in his paper, *The Revolution*, Marx's essay *On the 18th Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*.

After the general suspension of reform movements during the Civil War, we see a second outburst of German radicalism in America in the different sections of the International Workingmen's Association which sprang up in New York, Chicago, and San Francisco. In New York there was even an independent political party, the *Social Party*, which, though it lived through but one campaign, that of 1868, may be designated the first Socialist party in the United States. Soon after the war Marx's *Capital* had been published, and the German agitators in America, both workingmen and "intellectuals," became thoroughgoing Marxians. The International movement spread and reached its culmination in the transfer of the General Council of that body in 1872 from London to New York; but the fortunes of the association as a whole were already waning, and the last convention, held at Philadelphia in 1876, was compelled to announce the formal dissolution of the International. The German period of Socialism in the United States may be said to have ended with this dissolution.

The second beginning of American Socialism is to be found in the native labor movement. In ante-

bellum days the labor activity in this country was weak and intermittent. The predominance of agriculture, the high wages caused by the presence of free and fertile land, and the fact of manhood suffrage, all combined to prevent the crystallization of social classes in the North, and such labor organization as existed was usually the result either of some temporary and local controversy between employer and employed or of the efforts of foreign workingmen to transplant their old-world struggles in American ground.

The Civil War marked the close of the pioneer period in American history, with the beginning of industry on a national scale and of a definite proletarian class among the whites. In 1866, accordingly, we have the National Labor Union, differing from previous unions in its national character, its origin in American conditions, and its leadership by Americans, notably William Sylvis, of Pennsylvania. Sylvis even succeeded in organizing a Labor Reform Party, the attitude of which can be seen from the following declaration of Sylvis:—

“Our people are being divided into two classes—the rich and the poor, the producers and the non-producers. The working-people of our nation, white or black, male and female, are sinking to a condition of serfdom. Even now slavery exists in our land, worse than ever existed under the old slave system.”¹

The National Labor Union, and with it the Labor Reform Party, weakened and finally disappeared after the death of Sylvis in 1869, and it was not until after the panic of 1873, when the workers of

¹ Hillquit, op. cit., p. 189.

America learned to boast no longer their immunity from the conditions of labor throughout the world, that a permanent Socialist or Labor Party was formed. In 1874 there was organized in New York the Social-Democratic Workingmen's Party, which two years later united with other organizations under the name of Workingmen's Party of the United States. In 1877 the name was changed once more, and as the Socialist Labor Party this body still survives as the smaller of the two Socialist parties at the present day.

For ten years the party grew but intermittently, and was compelled to fight against serious elements of weakness. At first, not more than 10% of its members were native Americans, the majority being German workmen or political refugees, often with neither a vote nor a knowledge of the English language. Their doctrine was Marxian Socialism, interpreted by the principles of the German working-class movement, with as yet no specific application to the needs of the American proletariat, which had hardly begun to be conscious of itself. The trades unions, moreover, which in Germany had sprung up chiefly as a result of Socialist agitation, were in America already existing, but occupied almost entirely with strikes and local betterments and uninfluenced by broad considerations of either economics or the solidarity of labor.

Most serious of all was the fact that the Anarchists, banished from the International by Marx in 1872, were not long in transferring their chief activity across the Atlantic and infecting with their doctrines the more revolutionary of the American Socialists. For several years there was a question

as to which group would triumph, but in 1883 the weakened Socialist Labor Party declared definitely against "the folly of the men who consider dynamite bombs as the best means of agitation,"¹ and conducted a slowly-winning fight with the Anarchist International Working-People's Association until the latter received its death-blow in the execution of its leaders at Chicago in 1887. Since that date the Anarchist agitation in this country has been so scattered and unsystematic as to affect the Socialists but little. Individual Socialists and Anarchists at times work together in such matters as coöperative associations, protest meetings, and free speech demonstrations, but harmony even then is rare, and in all political matters they stand definitely apart.²

At its beginning the Socialist Labor Party, in view of its numerical weakness, made the following statement: "The sections of this party and all workingmen generally are earnestly requested for the time being to abstain from all political movements, and to turn their backs upon the ballot-box."³

Even during the first few years, however, local candidates were sometimes nominated and even elected, and in 1880 the Greenback Party was supported in the national election. Having accomplished nothing by this alliance, the Socialists in 1884 again advised abstention from the ballot, but in 1886 a wave of labor parties swept over the country, with which Socialists in several localities made common cause. The most important of these movements was the New York municipal campaign, in which the

¹ Hillquit, *op. cit.*, p. 241.

² See Leonard Abbott in *The Call*, June 14, 1910.

³ Hillquit, *op. cit.*, p. 260.

Socialist Labor Party fused with the local labor organizations and the Single Taxers to form the United Labor Party, with Henry George as candidate for mayor. Although a striking success was achieved in defeating Theodore Roosevelt, the Republican nominee, and keeping down to 22,000 the plurality of the Democrat, Abram Hewitt, the alliance proved but temporary. The next year it was dissolved by the expulsion of the Socialists from the United Labor Party on technical grounds.

After this experience there was no further fusion by the Socialists, and in 1892 a presidential ticket was nominated for the first time. The vote grew steadily from 21,512 in 1892 to 82,204 in 1898, a date which marks the zenith of the Socialist Labor Party.

The relation between the Socialists and the labor unions could not fail to be of importance in the history of both. From the beginning of its career, the S. L. P. continued to be associated on a friendly basis with several labor federations centering about New York. As yet there was no national labor organization of importance. In 1878, however, the Knights of Labor, which had started as a secret fraternity nine years before, became a public organization, and grew so rapidly that by 1886 it claimed a membership of over half a million. With a platform so socialistic in tone as to suggest the *Communist Manifesto*, the Knights of Labor was neither a revolutionary nor a democratic body, and not till toward the end of its career did it come into close contact with the S. L. P. The American Federation of Labor, on the other hand, formed in 1886 and soon rivaling the Knights, united a fairly conservative

declaration of principles with a really radical personnel and democratic administration, and from the first it contained many Socialists. Though even the president, Samuel Gompers, was at the outset friendly toward Socialism, the Socialist resolutions introduced in the conventions from time to time were always rejected, and in 1890 a charter was refused to the Central Labor Federation of New York, on the ground that one of its affiliated bodies was the "American section" of the S. L. P. From that time the S. L. P. has been a bitter enemy of the American Federation of Labor.

The Socialist Labor Party in New York now turned its attention to the Knights of Labor, and succeeded in electing several of its members delegates to the General Assembly, by the help of whom in 1893 T. V. Powderly was defeated as Master Workman of the order by J. R. Sovereign. The failure of Mr. Sovereign to keep his promise to appoint a Socialist editor of the official organ brought about an acrimonious controversy between Sovereign and Daniel De Leon, the leader of the Socialist Labor Party and editor of its daily, *The People*. As a result of this quarrel the convention of the Knights of Labor in 1895 refused to seat Mr. De Leon as delegate from the New York District Assembly, a definite break was made between the two organizations, and the Socialist Labor Party assumed toward the Knights of Labor the same hostile attitude that it already bore toward the American Federation of Labor.

De Leon and the other New York leaders now decided definitely to abandon all plans for the conversion of the national unions from within, and, with a nucleus consisting of the local unions of the Knights

of Labor who had remained true to the S. L. P., to form a new organization, the Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance. Although a labor rather than a political association, this alliance was in the nature of an appendage to the S. L. P., demanding strict party pledges from every officer, and giving representation to the party in its conventions. At first it denied the intention of interfering with unions already established or recruiting members except from workers previously unorganized, but this promise was soon forgotten; and the narrow and aggressive tactics, together with the highly centralized administration of the S. T. and L. A., brought about its rapid disintegration.

Instead of strengthening the Socialist Labor Party, this ill-fated labor organization proved a powerful cause of dissension, for many of the Socialist party members, already discontented under the dictatorial methods of De Leon and his New York coterie, did not hesitate to criticise the policy by which the national labor unions had been so effectually antagonized. This criticism only accentuated the position of the "De Leonites." *The People* denounced not only the Knights of Labor and the American Federation, but also all the socialistic movements, to be mentioned later on, that were now springing up outside the S. L. P. A "purification" of the party membership set in, during the course of which heretics and insubordinates were recklessly expelled. At last, in 1899, an open breach came about between the two factions led respectively by *The New York People* and the *New York Volks Zeitung*; and each side claimed the name Socialist Labor Party until just before the elections of that year, when the New

York courts adjudged this title to the original De Leon adherents. The insurgents called a convention at Rochester, at which they formally declared their independence, and made overtures of union to the newly-founded Social Democratic Party, of which more hereafter.

It is the fortune of the latter faction that we must now follow in pursuing the main current of Socialism in America; but the De Leon body, bearing the old title, Socialist Labor Party, is still in active existence, changed in no respect as to its dogmatic interpretation of Socialism and its hostility to non-socialist labor organizations, but with rapidly decreasing membership and vote. Socialists honor its memory as the carrier of Marxian doctrines to the United States, and as the advocate of the working-class when as yet it saw no need of an advocate, but, like many another pioneer organization, it outlived its power of adaptation, and made room for a Socialist body more fitted to the needs of Americans.

While, in the last decade of the century, the S. L. P. was gradually hardening into an exclusive and heresy-hunting organization, the rapidly developing capitalism of the country was bearing fruit in radical movements of every kind. On the one hand, the growth of national industries precipitated violent and far-reaching contests between capitalist and laborer, such as the Homestead, Cœur d'Alène, and Buffalo strikes of 1892, and the Pullman strike of 1894, as one result of which Eugene V. Debs suffered imprisonment and afterwards joined the Socialist forces. On the other hand, the eyes of public-spirited men and women were being opened to the growth of the trust, of the great fortunes,

and of the social evils that had long seemed foreign to our democracy. Edward Bellamy's Utopian novel "Looking Backward" had appeared in 1887, and Nationalist clubs sprang up everywhere, advocating a centralized and aristocratic Socialism, but mixing little with politics, and confined chiefly to educated and prosperous philanthropists. The Society of Christian Socialists, numbering among its members Professor R. T. Ely, Rev. W. D. P. Bliss, and Professor George D. Herron, was organized in 1889, and the American Fabian Society, under the leadership of Mr. Bliss and Mr. Laurence Gronlund, in 1895. These associations lasted but a few years, and merged their political activities, for the most part, in the People's Party, which promised much for radicalism in 1892 and 1894. They were of importance, however, in arousing Americans to the study of social problems and social forces, in modifying our spirit of individualism, and in preparing the way for the assimilation of the Marxian doctrines to American conditions.

In 1897 two organizations united in Chicago as a political party under the name of the Social Democracy of America. The first comprised those followers of Eugene V. Debs who had remained in the American Railway Union after its defeat in the Pullman strike, and the second was a society called the Brotherhood of the Commonwealth, centering around J. A. Wayland, of Kansas, the publisher of *The Coming Nation* and *The Appeal to Reason*. Since one wing of the newly-formed party inclined toward political action, and the other toward schemes of Western colonization, a break was inevitable, and in 1898 the

minority of the members, led by Eugene V. Debs and Victor Berger, "bolted," founding the Social Democratic Party of America.

It was to the latter organization that the "Rochester wing" of the Socialist Labor Party made its overtures for union in 1899. These were received favorably, with the result that a joint committee on union was created and a joint ticket nominated for the election of 1900, bearing the names of Eugene V. Debs of the Social Democratic Party for President and Job Harriman of the Socialist Labor Party for Vice-President. Suddenly seized with distrust, however, the majority of the former body failed to ratify the plan of union adopted by the joint committee, and, as the minority refused to abide by their decision, confusion became worse confounded. There were now three organizations in the field instead of two, to say nothing of the original "De Leonite" S. L. P. Fortunately the joint presidential ticket nominated by the Chicago and Rochester factions necessitated a truce during the 1900 election, and, after several months of enforced coöperation in the campaign, all the disputing parties, still with the exception of the old S. L. P., merged their differences in 1901 to form the present Socialist Party. In Milwaukee this organization still goes under the name of the Social Democratic Party.

Even in its divided condition the Socialist Party had polled a vote of 96,931, exceeding by more than 14,000 the highest vote ever cast by the Socialist Labor Party, and in 1904 this number had more than quadrupled, amounting to 409,230.¹ In 1908,

¹ S. P. Official Bulletin, May, 1909.

on the other hand, the vote had grown only to 424,483, and the local elections of 1909 were in many cases disappointing to the Socialists.¹ The membership of the party, moreover, which had increased from about 20,000 in 1903 to 41,751 in 1908, fell in 1909 to 41,479.²

A remarkable wave of Socialist advance, however, was recorded in 1910. The national vote rose to 604,756, showing a gain of 42% in two years; and the party membership registered 58,011, an increase of nearly 40% in but one year.³

Until 1910 the local victories of the Socialists had been scattering and for the most part insignificant. Brockton and Haverhill, Massachusetts, had Socialist mayors in 1903; there have been Socialists in the legislatures of Florida and Montana, and at one time two in that of Massachusetts.⁴

A sure footing existed in one state alone, Wisconsin, where for years the Social Democrats have been represented in the Milwaukee City Council and the State Legislature; and it was as a result of this gradual upbuilding of local influence that the Socialists of Milwaukee secured in 1910 the first great victory for their party. Here the city and county governments were captured by an almost record-breaking majority,⁵ the number of state senators was increased to two, and the representation in the lower house to twelve. Most significant of all, a Socialist, Victor Berger, was elected from Wisconsin to the Congress

¹ S. P. Official Bulletin, May, 1909.

² Ibid., April, 1909; February, 1910.

³ Ibid., January, 1911; Carl Thompson, *The Rising Tide of Socialism*.

⁴ Thompson, *Const. Program*, p. 13; Hillquit, *Hist. of Socialism*, Revised, p. 342; N. Y. Call, Dec. 12, 1909.

⁵ F. C. Howe, *The Outlook*, June 25, 1910.

of the United States, a second Socialist failing by only a small plurality.

In the same year Socialists were elected to the legislatures of North Dakota, Minnesota, and Pennsylvania, Massachusetts having seated a member of this party in 1909.

Local elections throughout the country gave further striking indication of Socialist strength. In addition to Milwaukee, Socialist mayors were elected in Berkeley, California, in Butte, Montana, and in 15 smaller municipalities in the western and central states.¹ New York State, where results had been most disappointing in 1909, made a striking gain in the campaign for the governorship of Charles Edward Russell, the magazine writer.

It is evident that the Socialist Party is no longer a mere organization of protest, but an aggressive third party, to which power is being entrusted in a steadily increasing degree. The object lessons afforded by the recently inaugurated Socialist administrations will be of the utmost value in determining the applicability of Marxian principles to actual American requirements.

The relation of the Socialist Party to the labor unions is still a much-discussed matter. The official attitude of the party is always definitely friendly to all unions, without regard to their political policies, but the American Federation of Labor, the largest body of the sort in the country, has never hitherto endorsed the Socialist resolution so assiduously presented at its conventions.² A considerable percentage of Socialists are members of unions,

¹ Appeal to Reason, April 22, 1911.

² Robert Hunter, N. Y. Call, Nov. 11, 1909.

however, the proportion in 1908 being 62% of those members of the party reporting under the heads "craftsmen" and "transportation." As many as 44% belonged to the American Federation of Labor, only 5% claiming connection with the Industrial Workers of the World and 13% with independent unions.¹

The Socialist press is invariably an organ of unionism. At certain times of stress, such as the trial of Moyer and Haywood in 1907, the Swedish General Strike in 1909, and the conviction of Gompers and Mitchell, even the American Federation makes common cause with the Socialists; but President Gompers is now an open opponent of Socialism, and mutual criticism and accusation are frequent. The effect of the antagonism upon Socialist tactics will be noted later on.

In the meantime the Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance of the old Socialist Labor Party has not been alone among Socialist unions. In 1904 the American Labor Union, a Western organization containing 150,000 members and including the Western Federation of Miners, endorsed the Socialist platform. The next year there was formed with a nucleus of the Western Federation of Miners a new organization, uniting temporarily the rival leaders Debs and De Leon, the latter of whom had lost hope for the Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance, but still aspired to a Socialist national labor union. The new body was based upon the industrial form of organization, by which all workers in a given industry are embraced in the union, rather than upon the craft organization, which includes only members of

¹ S. P. Official Bulletin, April, 1909. These figures are based on a partial enumeration of the party.

the same craft but may extend through various industries; it accordingly received the name of Industrial Workers of the World. Such an organization, because of its democratic composition and possibilities for mass action, is peculiarly adapted to Socialist purposes, and the industrial unions in the United States usually differ from the craft unions in their declaration of a class struggle, their opposition to such conciliatory bodies as the Civic Federation, and their refusal to enter into contractual relations with employers. The Western Federation of Miners make the following statement in their Resolutions of 1909:—

“We hold that there is a class struggle in society and that this struggle is caused by economic conditions. . . . We hold that the class struggle will continue until the producer is recognized as the sole master of his product. . . . We hold that an industrial union and the concerted political action of all wage-earners is the only method of attaining this end.”¹

Although the industrial Workers of the World began prosperously and soon claimed 100,000 members, disruption presently set in. In 1906 Eugene V. Debs resigned from the organization and the Western Federation of Miners withdrew in the same year. In order to bring together all Socialists to the support of the Industrial Workers, the Socialist Labor Party won over De Leon to a proposal of union between the two political parties; but the Socialist Party, failing to overcome their long-standing distrust of the parent organization, rejected the plan in 1908.² In the same year De Leon came into colli-

¹ Resolutions quoted in Appeal to Reason, Aug. 21, 1909.

² S. P. Weekly Bulletin, Nov. 2, 1907; Feb. 29, 1908.

sion with the other leaders of the Industrial Workers of the World, and was expelled.

Deprived of its chief sources of strength, the industrial organization dwindled for several years, claiming in 1908, as has been mentioned, only 5% of the Socialist Party, as against 44% belonging to the American Federation of Labor. At present, however, there are signs of a revival, if not necessarily of the original organization, at least of the industrial principle in unionism. Eugene V. Debs has again joined the ranks and the *International Socialist Review* is giving the industrial movement its unqualified support.¹ The suppression of the boycott in the case of Gompers, Mitchell, and Morrison has aroused widespread dissatisfaction with the older union methods, and American workingmen are beginning to look with greater favor both upon political action and upon radical forms of organization.²

While the Socialist Labor Party still maintains *The People* as its official organ, the Socialist Party has sought to avoid the mistakes of its predecessor by refusing to designate an official party press. The *Monthly Bulletin*, however, publishes the names of the Socialist periodicals on its exchange list, and the party is in constant friendly relation with many of these. The New York *Volks Zeitung* and the Jewish *Forward* are dailies dating from the days of the S. L. P., but the *New York Daily Call* has been in existence only since May, 1908, and is not yet on a completely self-sustaining basis. The *Chicago Daily Socialist*, founded in 1906, has but lately passed the

¹ Int. Soc. Rev., May, 1909, p. 900.

² See Boudin, in I. S. R., April, 1910, p. 919, and editorial, p. 933, 940.

experimental stage. The *Daily Register* is an English publication of Lead, South Dakota, and there are in addition to the *Volks Zeitung* and the *Forward*, German dailies in Chicago and Philadelphia, Bohemian in Chicago and Cleveland, and a Polish daily in Chicago. The most noteworthy Socialist weeklies are the *Social Democratic Herald* of Milwaukee, and the *Appeal to Reason* and *The Coming Nation* of Girard, Kansas, all of which antedate the formation of the present party. The *Christian Socialist* is the organ of the Christian Socialist Fellowship centering in Chicago. Seventeen other English weeklies are issued in various parts of the country, and periodicals are also published in German, Finnish, Swedish, Jewish, Croatian, Norwegian, Lettish, Hungarian, French, Italian, Slavonic, Slovak, and Polish.¹

The most important monthlies of the American Socialists are *The Masses*, established in New York in January, 1911, and the *International Socialist Review*. Since 1900 the latter has represented the international movement and received contributions from the leaders of Socialist thought in Europe. It is at present the organ of the "revolutionists." *The Progressive Woman* is devoted, as its name indicates, to propaganda among women.

As Socialism in America is still in the agitation stage, it must be judged more by its aims and tactics than by its accomplishments; and though, owing to the referendum system, we are better able to estimate the attitude of the Socialist rank and file than of the great body of Republicans or Democrats, yet it is from the political and intellectual leaders that we

¹ S. P. Official Bulletin, November, 1910.

must for the most part determine these aims and tactics. The general public is rather ignorant as to who constitute these leaders, however, and frequently authors and speakers are accepted by "the man in the street" as representatives of Socialism who are either outside the party lines altogether or comparatively uninfluential members therein. Since in the present study it is necessary to select a limited number of persons as party spokesmen, and since the determination of this leadership is clearly beyond the power of a single writer, the expedient will be taken, as suggested in a previous chapter, of employing as authorities chiefly those men and women who have held during the last four years the offices in the highest gift of the party. These include the National Secretary, the two Representatives in the International Socialist Bureau, the National Executive Committee of seven members, and the candidates for President and Vice-President of the United States. To these may be added those who hold the highest public offices to which Socialists have been elected, — those of State Senator, Mayor and U. S. Congressman, — as well as the 69 members of the National Committee.¹ While this list necessitates the omission of several names which the writer would without hesitation include among the leaders of Socialist thought, yet it must, owing to the party practice of direct election, give a near approximation to this leadership, to be modified chiefly by the consideration that men chosen to executive positions often owe the choice as much to their proved efficiency as to general acquiescence in their point of view.

¹ S. P. Official Bulletin, January, 1911.

The National Secretary of the Socialist Party has for several years been Mahlon S. Barnes. Morris Hillquit, author of *The History of Socialism in America* and *Socialism in Theory and Practice*, is the present official representative on the International Socialist Bureau, and has for some time been a member of the National Executive Committee. To Victor Berger, generally known as the leader of the "Wisconsin movement" and associate editor of the *Milwaukee Social Democratic Herald*, belongs the honor of being the first Socialist elected to the Congress of the United States. In view of this election, and of the "advisory" seat given him by the Copenhagen Congress, he ranks as a second representative in the International Socialist Bureau. Mr. Berger and Mr. Robert Hunter, author of *Poverty and Socialists at Work*, are the members of the committee who obtained the highest vote last year. John Spargo, a fourth long-standing member of the committee, is well-known for his propaganda books, — *Socialism*, *The Socialists*, *The Substance of Socialism*, etc. Newly elected members are James F. Carey, formerly member of the Massachusetts legislature, George H. Goebel, and Lena Morrow Lewis, the first woman to hold that office. The candidates for President and Vice-President of the United States in the campaigns of 1904 and 1908 were Eugene V. Debs, the leader of the American Railway Union in the Pullman Strike of 1894, and the late Ben Hanford, a member of Typographical Union No. 6 of New York. Among Socialist mayors are Emil Seidel of Milwaukee and Reverend J. Stitt Wilson, of Berkeley, California; a State Senator of Wisconsin is W. J. Gaylord, the translator of Kampffmeyer's

Changes in Theory and Tactics in the German Social Democracy. Of the 69 members of the National Committee, three whose utterances have received wide circulation are May Wood-Simons, author of *Woman and the Social Problem*, Algernon Lee, former editor of the *New York Call* and present secretary of the Rand School of Social Science, and Carl D. Thompson, a member of the Milwaukee city government, whose book on *The Constructive Program of Socialism* is a typical exposition of the "Wisconsin" point of view. Recent members of the National Executive Committee are the following: J. G. Phelps-Stokes; Joseph Medill Patterson; Ernest Untermann, translator of Marx's *Capital*, and author of *Marxian Economics, Science and Revolution*, and *The World's Revolutions*; J. M. Work, author of *What's So and What Isn't in Socialism*; and A. M. Simons, editor of the *Chicago Daily Socialist* and formerly of the *International Socialist Review*, and author of *Class Struggles in America*, *The American Farmer*, and many propaganda tracts.

It will be noted that, conveniently for the present inquiry, the foremost officers above named have almost without exception expressed themselves at length in Socialist literature. Where such has not been the case, the writer has endeavored to supply the deficiency by referring to public speeches, discussions in the party press, the official bulletin, and personal information.

Before taking up in detail the theories, aims, and tactics of American Socialism, the statement may be made that this movement invariably calls itself Marxian. The declaration is frequent, indeed, that

Marx was fallible, and that his works constitute no inspired Bible of Socialism. At times there is even ridicule by Socialist writers of the "orthodox ultra-Marxist, who is more of a Marxist than Marx himself."¹ To a man, however, the officers named above, together with the party writers, lecturers, and organizers in general, hold acknowledged allegiance to Karl Marx.

In spite of this assurance, there is a prevalent impression that the American Socialist forces are divided into two camps: the one, known as the Marxist or revolutionist, adhering in all respects to the letter of the Marxian law, and the other, termed revisionist, constructivist, or opportunist, consisting of a band of social reformers who cling to Marx merely as the liberal Churchman still clings to the creed of Calvin. Whether or not the American Socialists are justified in their profession can be discovered only by tracing in detail their position on the cardinal points of Marxism as mentioned above, — the economic interpretation of history, the class struggle, and the breakdown of capitalism, with the supplementary doctrines of surplus value and the cause of crises.

A more consistent study would doubtless have been made if the writer had selected as types of American Socialism only the more scientific Marxian theorists. American Socialism, however, though it claims to be founded upon scientific principles, is in itself not a science, but an actual and popular movement, with all the imperfections and inconsistencies of such a movement. While the Marxian theories should constantly be kept in mind as a basis of compari-

¹ Ladoff, *The Passing of Capitalism*, p. 39, 141.

son, there is in these pages no attempt at a study of scientific socialism as applied to the United States, but rather an effort to determine the belief, program, and methods of the movement calling itself American Socialism, irrespective of its consistency or scientific quality.

CHAPTER IV

THE ECONOMIC INTERPRETATION OF HISTORY

THE economic interpretation of history was outlined in a previous chapter as the explanation of the political and intellectual history of an epoch by the prevailing mode of economic production and exchange and the social organization necessarily following from it; and is as often termed by Socialists "the materialistic conception of history" or "economic determinism," with corresponding shades of difference in its meaning.¹

It is universally accepted among American Socialists, and is employed in all their literature, from the constructivist pages of Robert Hunter to the revolutionary pamphlets of Debs and Hanford.² Boudin and Untermann, the two chief Marxian apologists in America, accept without reserve the economic interpretation of history; while Boudin makes it a mere introduction to the workings of the capitalist system, Untermann frankly inverts the method of *Capital* in his popularization, *Marxian Economics*, so as to subordinate absolutely the theoretical to the historical.³ Spargo places the doctrine in the forefront of his work, and A. M. Simons has cast the greater part

¹ Com. Man., p. 6.

² Debs, *The Issue*, p. 13; Hanford, *Socialism and the Organized Labor Movement*.

³ Boudin, *op. cit.*, chap. iv; Untermann, *op. cit.*, p. 12.

of his Socialist writing into the form of such historical studies as *The American Farmer* and *Class Struggles in America*.¹ Hillquit claims that Marx introduced the spirit of Darwinism into sociology by substituting the economic interpretation of history and the class struggle in the more modern stages of social development for the instinct of self-preservation and the struggle for existence in the lower.²

The platform of 1908, it is true, makes no formal mention of this doctrine, but its opening paragraph sounds the note of economic determinism with the sentences:—

“Human life depends upon food, clothing, and shelter. Only with these assured are freedom, culture, and higher human development possible. To produce food, clothing, and shelter, land and machinery are needed. . . . Whoever has control of land and machinery controls human labor, and with it human life and liberty.”³

The economic interpretation of history has gradually been accepted as a method in history and economics. Says Professor Seligman:—

“The economic interpretation of history, in emphasizing the historical basis of economic institutions, has done much for economics. On the other hand, it has done even more for history. . . . Whether or not we are prepared to accept it as an adequate explanation of human progress in general, we must all recognize the beneficial influence that it has exerted in stimulating the thoughts of scholars

¹ Spargo, *The Socialists*, p. 22.

² Hillquit, *Socialism in Theory and Practice*, p. 51.

³ S. P. Nat. Platform, p. 2.

and in broadening the concepts and the ideals of history and economics alike.”¹

The application of this theory, however, occupies a different status, and the world of science, in sanctioning the method, has in no sense assented to the deductions drawn from it by Marx and Engels regarding the tendencies of capitalist society.² As this application is chiefly in connection with the doctrines of the class struggle and the approaching fall of capitalism, detailed discussion of it will be reserved to a later chapter.

In the treatment by Professor Seligman, whose essay on the economic interpretation of history is quoted by the Socialists as a just estimate of Marx's doctrine on this point, five possible objections are brought forward and refuted:—

“First, that the theory of economic interpretation is a fatalistic theory, opposed to the doctrine of free will and overlooking the importance of great men in history; second, that it rests on the assumption of ‘historical’ laws, the very existence of which is open to question; third, that it is socialistic; fourth, that it neglects the ethical and spiritual forces in history; fifth, that it leads to absurd exaggerations.”³

In the refutation of the third objection, Professor Seligman naturally places himself in opposition to the Socialists above quoted, but in all his other conclusions they are in substantial agreement with him.

The exaggerations which Professor Seligman mentions, showing them to have no necessary connection

¹ Econ. Int. of Hist., p. 159, *seq.*

² Simkhovitch, op. cit., No. 2, p. 652.

³ Op. cit., p. 90; see also N. Y. Worker, August 24, Sept. 7, 1907.

with the economic interpretation of history, are not absent among American Socialists, appearing chiefly in relation to the notions of fatalism and materialism. As economic determinism the theory sometimes becomes a genuine fatalism, Arthur Morrow Lewis, whose popularizations of science are widely influential among workingmen, going so far as to oppose it both to religion and the doctrine of free will.¹ Mr. Lewis is almost alone among American leaders, however, in voicing these oppositions, and Spargo is typical in repudiating vigorously the charge of fatalism.²

Still less frequently is the "materialistic" conception of history held in such a degree as to exclude the acknowledgment of idealistic or spiritual factors in society. Boudin, a theorist of the uncompromising Marxian school, declares that Marx allows full credit to ideas as moving forces, and is in fact a greater idealist than his opponents in that he treats the idea as an actual phenomenon rather than a fanciful abstraction, and brings it within the domain of science by searching for its cause in material conditions. The idea is a social force which, though generated by economic conditions, may, and often does, influence an individual in a direction contrary to his own economic interest.³

Work denies emphatically the charge of "rank materialism," and Spargo cites both Marx and Engels to the effect that the economic factor in history is not the sole element, but the determining condition under which men make their own history.⁴

¹ Arthur Morrow Lewis, *Ten Blind Leaders of the Blind*, pp. 4-5, 90-98.

² John Spargo, *Socialism*, p. 65.

³ Boudin, *op. cit.*, chap. ii-iii, *passim*.

⁴ Work, *op. cit.*, p. 83; Spargo, *Socialism*, p. 72, 74, 76.

While the foremost Socialist thinkers in America are thus almost unanimous in repudiating the exaggerations of the economic interpretation of history, the rank and file of the party are as a rule less moderate in their expression of the doctrine. The quotation from the platform given above bears traces of the materialistic point of view, and the following passage from the Appeal to Reason illustrates the irreverence in intellectual matters generated by the doctrine:—

“When you get the ‘materialistic conception of history,’ many things are made plain. The halos round the heads of the ‘great men’ will disappear, and you have reached a point where the mouthings of bourgeois historians can no longer fool you.”¹

Throughout the correspondence columns of the Socialist press, in local meetings, and in popular lectures, we meet with a determinism that lays stress upon the inevitability of the revolution, and a materialism that often scoffs at religion, maintaining the principle of “appeal through the stomach.” The outdoing of Marx in this respect may perhaps be due to the fact that the evolution of Hegelianism was conscious and the expression of will, that of Darwinism, which the followers of Marx have incorporated into his theory, unconscious and the result of inevitable law, or it may be ascribed, perhaps more practically, to the powerful impression made upon the untrained mind when suddenly confronted with the law of evolution, to the “little knowledge” which “inclineth a man toward atheism.”

An important consequence of economic interpreta-

¹ Appeal to Reason, Mar. 16, 1907.

tion in its extreme form is the denial of an absolute standard of ethics and the substitution therefor of varying codes of class morality, the bourgeois on the one hand and the proletarian on the other.¹ Each of these ethical systems prescribes only such virtues as tend to the advantage of its respective class; and such habits as thrift and reverence are as characteristic of the bourgeois as union solidarity and world-patriotism of the proletarian. Thus to the extremist "good" and "bad" are mere euphemisms for relations of class-interest.

Differences as to the fatalistic element in economic determinism exert in two ways an effect upon the policy of the Socialist Party.

The first of these has to do with the "great man theory." While the doctrine of absolute equality has never entered into Marxian Socialism, the deterministic philosophy has to some extent taken its place in ascribing all great achievements to social, rather than individual influences, and in refusing to allow "credit" to superior persons for mental and moral qualities due to environment rather than to their own exertions. This philosophy is doubtless largely accountable for the vigorous repudiation of leadership before alluded to, the exaggerated democracy which, as we shall see later, characterizes the socialist parties, and the "proletarian-intellectual" controversy which furnishes a frequent basis for internal disputes.

The second effect upon socialist policy lies in the fundamental antagonism between determinism and human choice. According to the degree in which Marxians recognize the latter element as a social

¹ R. R. La Monte, *op. cit.*, p. 59, *seq.*, 76.

factor, they endeavor on the one hand to construct an outline of the future commonwealth which shall stand the test of desirability, and on the other to introduce Socialist modifications into present society by means of the ballot. They thus tend toward constructive political action. The extreme determinists, on the contrary, expect "the stars in their courses" to fight for Socialism, irrespective of the blunders or achievements of its supporters. They refuse to submit details for the coming society on the ground that these will come about, whether desirable or not, by the automatic working of economic forces which the future is to develop. They devote their efforts to organizing the workers and arming them with political rights against the day of predestined revolution, leaving in general all plans for progressive amelioration and socialization to the inevitable action of industrial forces during the last stages of capitalism.

We have seen that the economic interpretation of history is present in all utterances of American Socialism and constitutes the conscious basis of the movement in all its phases. While the leaders and theoreticians almost without exception deny the charges of fatalism and materialism, quoting the well-known modifications of the doctrine by Marx and Engels, there is a distinct tendency to exaggeration in these two directions among the membership of the Socialist parties. This exaggeration is of practical importance in the tendency to substitute a new ethical standard for the working-class, to permeate the Socialist parties with an antagonism to leadership, and to inculcate in the "revolutionary" faction a policy of organized protest rather than of constructive activity.

CHAPTER V

THE CLASS STRUGGLE

IN the United States the division of the Socialist from the social reformer is made largely upon the basis of the recognition of the class struggle. While Bellamy, whose millennium was to proceed from a wave of enlightenment on the part of all classes, and Gronlund, who exclaims, —

“European Socialists . . . actually preach class war between workingmen and the possessing classes. . . . God preserve us here from such a doctrine,” —

were thorough collectivists, yet they are not acknowledged by present-day American Socialism.¹ Though, as we shall notice, the shades of this struggle are infinite, even such distinctly middle-class organizations as the Intercollegiate Socialist Society, the Collectivist Society of New York, and the Christian Socialist Fellowship preach its existence, and it is only the non-party Socialist, represented in New York by Mrs. Charlotte Perkins Gilman and by Mr. John Martin, who definitely opposes this doctrine.

The Socialist Party platform declares the class struggle in no uncertain terms: —

¹ Bellamy, *Looking Backward*, p. 57; Gronlund, *New Economy*. p. 11.

"A bitter struggle over the division of the products of labor is waged between the exploiting propertied classes on the one hand, and the exploited propertyless class on the other. In this struggle the wage-working class cannot expect adequate relief from any reform of the present order at the hands of the dominant class. . . . The struggle between wage workers and capitalists grows ever fiercer, and has now become the only vital issue before the American people. The wage-working class, therefore, has the most direct interest in abolishing the capitalist system."¹

So also the New York municipal platform:—

"The only real issue in this campaign, as in all other campaigns, is the contest between the working class and the capitalist class for the possession of the powers of government. . . . Between these two classes there can be no peace, no compromise. The strife is increasing and grows ever fiercer and in no country more than this."²

The one condition for membership in the Socialist Party is subscription to the formula:—

"I, the undersigned, recognizing the class struggle between the capitalist class and the working class, and the necessity of the working class constituting themselves into a political party distinct from and opposed to all parties formed by the propertied classes, hereby declare that I have severed my relations with all other parties," etc.³

By far the commonest topic of the street meeting and the local discussion is the class struggle, and by

¹ S. P. National Platform, 1908, p. 2.

² N. Y. Municipal Platform of 1909, Preamble.

³ S. P. National Constitution, Art. 2, Sec. 5.

few other allusions can the party orator win such applause from a working-class audience. Hardly a page of the Socialist press is free from such declarations as the following:—

“The sooner the class struggle be understood, fought out, and the incident closed, the better for the working class and the race as a whole.”¹

“To improve their condition in any way . . . the laborers must fight. . . . And they must also be prepared to be clubbed, shot, arrested, fined, imprisoned, and be generally treated as rebels, enemies of society. Such is the nature of the harmony between capital and labor.”²

“Now the working-class is organizing to overthrow the capitalist regime and put the working class in power. That also is war and every strike is a battle in that war, and when battles are fought some one generally gets hurt.”³

Hillquit, Simons, Spargo, and Untermann quote with one accord the doctrine as set forth in the *Communist Manifesto*, and Simons has entitled one of his studies *Class Struggles in America*.⁴

W. J. Ghent, author of *Our Benevolent Feudalism* and *Mass and Class*, represents the “intellectual” and moderate Marxians. He tells the workman, however, —

“Your employer’s interests in the matter of hours, wages, and conditions in your particular trade are antagonistic to your own interests.”⁵

¹ Western Clarion, quoted in N. Y. Worker, Sept. 2, 1907.

² N. Y. Call, Dec. 7, 1909. ³ Appeal to Reason, Oct. 9, 1909.

⁴ Hillquit, *Socialism in T. and P.*, p. 154; Simons, *Philosophy of Socialism*, p. 4, *Single Tax and Socialism*, p. 13; Spargo, *Socialism*, p. 125; Untermann, *Marxian Economics*, p. 165.

⁵ N. Y. Worker, July 11, 1908.

When J. G. Phelps-Stokes joined the Socialist Party in 1906, he based his decision upon the recognition by him of the existence in America of two economic classes, those who produce more than they consume, and those who consume more than they produce.¹

Without exception the Socialist leaders affirm the necessity not only of acknowledging, but of emphasizing the class struggle in propaganda. Even Victor Berger, United States Congressman and acknowledged head of the constructive forces in the party, maintains that emphasis upon this point is both desirable and necessary, since it would be foolish and wrong to deny the existence of economic classes.

George Allan England, a well-known Socialist magazine writer, modifies the statement to some extent: —

“Whether or not our propaganda should lay emphasis upon the class struggle depends upon what stage of development we have reached. In the earlier stages, when the movement is educational rather than political, this and other doctrinal matters should be stressed. Later, when the political character predominates, and when the immediate demands are in a fair way to be realized, *those* should take first place.”

Morris Hillquit suggests with characteristic tact that as an abstract doctrine the class struggle is likely to be misunderstood by non-socialists and to provoke antagonism rather than to convert. He advises therefore that, while Socialism, as a class movement, cannot avoid emphasizing the struggle in propa-

¹ N. Y. Times, July 13, 1906, J. G. Phelps-Stokes.

ganda, it should do so largely by dwelling upon the practical demonstration of the conflict in the criticism of existing conditions.

While the class struggle is thus emphasized, as well as acknowledged, by all divisions of American Socialists, the shades of the struggle as thus declared vary from the mere recognition of economic antagonism to the avowal of actual class hatred. In Eugene V. Debs the contest arouses genuine revolutionary spirit, as he discerns in it not merely the strife of political parties, but a life and death struggle between two hostile economic classes.¹ The same spirit appears throughout Ben Hanford's *The Labor War in Colorado*, and it was Hanford who in the 1904 convention gave vent to the war-cry, —

“The working-class, right or wrong — I don't care whether they are right or wrong.”²

In contrast with the foregoing exultation in the class struggle is Mr. Spargo's careful chapter upon the subject in *Socialism*, with his repudiation of the charge of preaching class hatred, and his declaration that Socialism is not responsible for the existence of the struggle, but is, on the contrary, a constructive force working to turn the inevitable contest away from violence and bloodshed to a peaceful political revolution.³ Robert Hunter voices a similar point of view in the statement that Socialists do not advocate the class conflict, but merely recognize its inevitability and strive to abolish it.⁴

¹ The S. P. and the Working Class, p. 5.

² Nat. Convention of S. P., 1904, p. 205.

³ Socialism, chap. vi, Capital and Labor, p. 37, 40.

⁴ Socialists at Work, p. viii.

J. M. Work, consistently with his published expression as to the regrettable necessity of the antagonism, became involved in a controversy on the subject with members of the National Committee in 1908.¹ In connection with a minority report submitted by him as a member of the National Platform Committee, he acknowledged the class struggle, but interpreted it in such a way as to arouse the indignation of certain committeemen of Washington and Oregon, the strongholds of "proletarianism." While Mr. Work reaffirmed his declaration that "Class-consciousness is not class hatred," the opposing members went so far as to proclaim their approval of class hatred itself as the only truly proletarian attitude.² In similar fashion the *International Socialist Review*, in its criticism of Spargo's book, *The Substance of Socialism*, opposes the latter in his repudiation of class hatred.³

While the class struggle doctrine is an integral part of the Socialist application of economic determinism, it can also be independently deduced from the theory of surplus value. In American propaganda, on the other hand, it appears usually as a statement of fact based upon economic phenomena such as strikes and lock-outs, lying within the observation of the working-class to whom the doctrine is addressed. Its conspicuous position in the movement serves, as has before been mentioned, to make clear the distinction between the Socialist and the socialistic reformer. Debs tells us that certain candidates for office, by denying the class struggle, have almost

¹ Op. cit., p. 89.

² Nat. Weekly Bulletin, Jan. 18, 1908, etc.

³ International Socialist Review, April, 1910, p. 944.

infallibly fixed their status as friends of capital and enemies of labor, and even Robert Hunter makes the test of a Socialist the side on which he fights, maintaining that "no well-founded party has *ever* ignored the class struggle."¹

Within the movement this doctrine, even more than the economic interpretation of history, plays a part in the variations of Socialist policy. In so far as the deterministic philosophy has broken down, among the extreme Socialists, the ideal of an absolute ethical standard, this vacancy is filled by a class ethics, the direct outcome of economic conditions, the chief virtue in which is class-consciousness, — the recognition of, and loyalty to, one's own social class. This class-consciousness gives such an effective reënforcement to the dislike of acknowledged leadership above referred to that we find in some Socialist quarters a distrust by the proletariat of those members of the middle class who have made common cause with them, and even a loyalty to the class of manual workers that looks askance upon the mental laborers, or "intellectuals," who form a part of the movement.

The varying Socialist opinions in this matter are illustrated on the one hand by Carl Thompson, the Wisconsin Socialist, who quotes the French Jaurès in his refusal to limit the class struggle to wage-workers alone, and on the other by Arthur Morrow Lewis, who exults in Professor Ely's charge that Socialism has tended to deprive the wage-earners of aid from the other classes, and asserts that with some brilliant exceptions the men who have come to So-

¹ Debs, *The Socialist Party and the Working Class*, p. 12; Hunter, *N. Y. Call*, Aug. 17, 1909.

cialism from the higher ranks have been "of inferior and not superior intelligence." ¹

A point of immediate controversy which will be taken up later in more detail is the attitude of the Socialist Party toward the craft and the industrial unions. The industrial unions, represented by the Western Federation of Miners and the Industrial Workers of the World, base themselves avowedly upon the class struggle, distrust the capitalists to such an extent as to refuse to enter into contracts, and attempt to sink all trade demarcations in an organization of the entire body of wage-workers against their employers. The craft unions, on the contrary, in which the American Federation of Labor is the controlling force, make no declaration of the class conflict, seek to better conditions by separate negotiations and trade agreements, and, by coöperation with such organizations as the Civic Federation, accept the proposition that the interests of master and man are identical. While the very acknowledgment of the class struggle on the part of a Socialist precludes his acceptance of the latter attitude, the degree of his hostility thereto is held by certain members of the party to measure his loyalty to the class struggle doctrine.

In connection with the economic interpretation of history, the doctrine of the class struggle thus forms the foundation of the American Socialist movement. The acceptance of it is universal among party members, and the leaders of the organization, while suggesting tact in the presentation of the doctrine, yet unite in advising emphasis upon it in all propaganda. As a rule, however, the Socialist repudiates

¹ Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 9; Lewis, *Ten Blind Leaders*, p. 79.

the charge of class hatred, disclaims responsibility for the existence of the struggle, and maintains that only by the triumph of Socialism can it be ended.

“In abolishing the present system,” says the platform, “the workingmen will free not only their own class, but also all other classes of modern society: the small farmer, . . . the small manufacturer and trader, . . . and even the capitalist himself, who is the slave of his wealth rather than its master.”¹

The practical influence of the class struggle idea is to be seen chiefly in the distinction which it draws between the Socialist and the reformer, in the ideal of class-consciousness which in its extreme form inculcates distrust of the intellectual allies of Socialism, and in its application to the labor movement in such a way as to create sharp antagonism between the adherents of the craft and the industrial union.

¹ S. P. National Platform, 1908, p. 3.

CHAPTER VI

THE THEORY OF SURPLUS VALUE

As has already been shown, not Marx's theory of surplus value, but his economic interpretation of history, with the consequent doctrines of the class struggle and the fall of capitalism, forms the basis of scientific Socialism.¹ As Marx's greatest work, *Capital*, however, is largely devoted to an exposition of this theory of value, and as the latter has hitherto furnished the chief point of attack for the more serious critics of Marxism, it is of importance to analyze the position of American Socialists with regard to it.

While the economic interpretation of history constitutes the chief framework of American Socialist writings, both popular and scientific, and while the class struggle forms the favorite topic of propaganda speeches, one may mingle a long time with party workers before encountering an explicit allusion to the theory of value.

Neither the national nor the New York municipal program makes any reference to the theory other than that implied in the oft-used word "exploitation," and the subject seldom appears in the party

¹ Simkhovitch, op. cit., No. 1, p. 195.

press except in an occasional "question-box" or course of study. It is frequent, on the other hand, to meet in popular pamphlets a declaration as to the existence of surplus value, unconnected with any theory as to its origin. Ben Hanford made the statement that about one-half of the five hundred millions profit of the railroads is exploited from the employees as withheld wages; Leffingwell makes the essence of profit consist in the circumstance that the worker has received only a small portion of the value of his product; and Eugene V. Debs speaks of the working class as "being robbed of what their labor produces."¹

At first glance, one might form the conclusion that Marx's pure economics has been discarded by the American Socialist movement, but such is not the case. There is hardly a party leader who does not, when questioned, affirm his Marxism in the matter of surplus value, as decidedly as in the class struggle and the economic interpretation of history. J. M. Work gives a simple statement of it; La Monte has popularized it in his lecture on *Science and Socialism*, and Hillquit states his unqualified adherence to it; presenting it in condensed form in his *Socialism in Theory and Practice*.² Both Ernest Untermann and his rival in Marxian interpretation, L. B. Boudin, have presented discussions of the surplus value theory, which unite in defending it in its entirety against the Revisionists, that school of Socialists before alluded to, who, under the leadership of the German Bernstein, have suggested that the Marxian

¹ Hanford, *Railroading in the U. S.*, p. 11; Leffingwell, *op. cit.*, p. 12; Debs, *Unionism and Socialism*, p. 24.

² Work, *op. cit.*, p. 88; La Monte, *op. cit.*, p. 33; Hillquit, *Socialism in Theory and Practice*, p. 157.

theories be revised in the light of modern economics and recent industrial development.¹ A study course in Socialism has recently been published in the party press by authority of the National Executive Committee; and the three lessons of this course which are devoted to the theory of value, with such excursions into general economics as are needed for its comprehension, show an unqualified acquiescence in the doctrine.²

In the rare cases, moreover, in which the value theory is touched upon in the unofficial socialist press, it is invariably defended. The *Appeal to Reason* occasionally gives a simple exposition of surplus value, and answers the charge that no Socialists of importance now preach the doctrine of Marx with the challenge, — "Name a Socialist of importance who does not teach the Marxian theory of surplus value, the claim that all profit is robbery. Also be so kind as to disprove that theory."³

The apparent ignoring of surplus value, then, in American propaganda, is not to be ascribed to such a repudiation of this doctrine as that of the Fabians Hobson and Shaw, but to a realization that the Socialist movement is founded upon economic determinism and the class struggle rather than upon the analysis contained in *Capital*.⁴

Revisionism, on the other hand, has not been wholly without effect upon American Socialists. The statement is generally made that Marx is fallible, although, as in the case of many other confessions of human frailty, this statement is usually vigorously

¹ International Socialist Review, September and November, 1906.

² N. Y. Call, Nov. 13, Nov. 20, 27, Dec. 4, 1909.

³ Aug. 28, 1909; see also April 6, 1907.

⁴ Hobson, op. cit., chap. x. Shaw, Fabian Essays, p. 140, seq.

resisted when applied to any details of the Marxian system.

The Wisconsin wing of the party, which in practice has approached most nearly the Revisionist policies, is in theory also the least inclined to accept Marx as an unerring guide. One of these leaders acknowledges that he has not read Marx's *Capital* entire; and another states definitely that "the theory of value has been qualified somewhat of late by eminent German and French Marxians."

In the latest edition of *Socialism*, Spargo accepts Revisionism in principle, quoting Marx and Engels to show that the Socialist pioneers themselves ridiculed the idea of the crystallization of their theories into a dogma, and censuring their successors for a failure in the task bequeathed them of keeping Marxism abreast of progress.¹ When it comes to particulars, however, he yields but little of the value theory, merely acknowledging, as does A. M. Lewis also, the break-down of the doctrine in the case of a monopoly.

Nowhere do we find among American Socialists a genuine confronting of the Marxian value theory with that of marginal utility. Spargo states his opinion that Marx's doctrine may be said to include the law of marginal utility, in so far as the basis of social utility is the socially necessary labor for its production.² Boudin makes a similar declaration, asserting that social usefulness, while neither the cause nor the measure of exchange value, constitutes its limitation, but neither of these writers enters into an explanation of his statement.³ Boudin, on

¹ *Socialism*, Rev., p. 120-121.

² *Ibid.*, p. 258, 260.

³ Boudin, op. cit., p. 97.

the contrary, meets Böhm-Bawerk's charge that Marx disregards the element of utility by the contention that, while Marx recognizes the element as present in all value, utility is qualitative rather than quantitative in character, and thus cannot measure a purely quantitative relation such as exchange value. The Study Course in Socialism follows Boudin in this argument, making the assertions:—

“Utilities differ qualitatively and cannot be compared quantitatively. . . . Nor does the amount of value depend upon the degree of utility. . . . The amount of value depends, not on a thing's usefulness, but on the difficulty of obtaining it.”¹

As the law of marginal utility, however, is essentially a reduction of utility to the quantitative relation, it is evident that the American theorists here fail to take issue with the real contention of Böhm-Bawerk.

A controversy existing recently among American Marxians and illustrative of the manner in which Socialists may differ in their interpretation while denying the principles of Revisionism, related to the “great contradiction” in the law of surplus value in the first volume of *Capital*. Marx himself detected this apparent contradiction in the course of the volume and promised its solution later on. The second volume failed to disentangle the knot, and, in response to a challenge from Engels, many economists brought forward solutions of their own. Finally, the third volume of *Capital* redeemed the promise, according to Engels and the Socialists, by solving the problem in perfect consistency with the Marxian

¹ Study Course in Socialism, Lesson II; The Economics of Socialism.

theory of value, according to Böhm-Bawerk and non-socialists by cutting the Gordian knot and giving up the value theory altogether.

The contradiction is as follows: by the Marxian theory profit comes in no case from the investment of constant capital, but only from the investment of variable capital in labor power with its consequent exploitation; how does it happen, therefore, that profits tend to an equality in all industries, no matter what may be the proportions of constant and variable capital in their respective investments?

Marx solves the riddle in this manner: — According to the labor theory, surplus value, derived from the investment of variable capital in labor power, is the sole source of profits; therefore the total profits of all industry must be equal to the entire surplus value extracted from the laborers. However, since the constant capital embodied in machinery and tools is as necessary a condition to exploitation as variable capital itself, the employer reckons his rate of profit upon the whole mass of capital, just as if it were produced by constant and variable alike. If all commodities were sold at their values, we should thus have different rates of profit obtaining in industries enjoying the same rate of surplus value. Actually, however, goods are sold at their real value only when they embody the average proportion of constant and variable capital, thus affording the average rate of profit. In all other cases, competition adds to or subtracts from the actual cost price of the commodity such a quantity as will equalize the rate of profit to the average prevailing in industry.

“The average profit which determines the prices of production must always be approximately equal

to that quantity of surplus-value, which falls to the share of a certain individual capital in its capacity as an aliquot part of the total social capital.”¹

The price of production thus created and the market price based upon it bear thus no relation to the specific labor value of the commodity in question, but are merely *dominated* by the law of value, “since a reduction or increase of the labor-time required for production causes the prices of production to fall or to rise.”²

Böhm-Bawerk has pointed out that the contradiction is here reconciled only by a partial surrendering of the law of value.¹ Marx’s reasoning is correct in that the sum of all the profits of industry would equal at once their combined surplus value and their entire value minus the sum of the wages expended in their production. As he unhesitatingly affirms, however, the *relative* exchange values of the various commodities depend now on the cost price as adjusted to the average rate of profit, and so bear no necessary relation whatever to their real relative labor values. Since, according to Volume I. of *Capital*, the theory of value must furnish an explanation of the exchange relation of commodities rather than of their total values, the conclusion is here unavoidable that Marx has here sacrificed the inaccurate but concrete law with which he set out to a comparatively valueless general theory which is nevertheless more strictly in accord with the observed facts of industry.³

Robert Rives La Monte, the American translator of Deville’s works on Socialism, clings to the literal

¹ Marx, *Capital*, Vol. III. p. 211.

² Karl Marx and the Close of his System, p. 60, *seq.*

³ *Capital*, Vol. I. p. 41, ff.

law of value as expressed in Book I. of *Capital*.¹ Untermann and Boudin, however, maintain, with Kautsky, and in accordance with Book III., that commodities are not habitually sold at their values; and Untermann claims that the law of Book I. was merely "tentatively developed by Marx as an introduction to a practical application to his theoretic findings in Vol. III."² Both Untermann and La Monte consider the subject as of more than academic importance, bringing it into connection with the intra-socialist controversy as to revolution and reform. Each of the disputing sides, however, is loyal in protesting the consistency of Marx and laying all the blame on the other party to the controversy.³

The attitude of American Socialist writers toward the value theory is, accordingly, that of the apologist Kautsky rather than of the revisionist Bernstein. Their Socialism, like the progressive orthodoxy of the modern churches, accepts, when it must, the results of criticism, but whenever possible ascribes an error to the mistakes of interpreters rather than to the fountain-head of orthodoxy itself.

The "iron law of wages," often carelessly ascribed to Marx, but really a contribution of Lassalle, is sometimes erroneously deduced as a corollary from the Marxian law of value.⁴ This law, closely related to the classical law of wages, is as follows: even if, by industry or good fortune, the worker's product is increased, or by thrift the cost of his subsistence is diminished, yet he can never perma-

¹ Chicago Socialist, Mar. 4, 1905, quoted by Untermann, *Marxian Economics*, p. 195, note.

² *Marxian Economics*, p. 195, n.

³ See La Monte, *op. cit.*, p. 36.

⁴ Bernstein, Ferdinand Lassalle, p. 134.

nently receive in wages more than this mere cost, the natural value of labor. It is obvious that the only variation of this statement from the Marxian law of wages as contained in the theory of value is in the epithet "iron," implying as it does an invariable standard of living fixed at the minimum of subsistence; and this invariability is clearly in opposition to the facts of the frequent raising of the standard of living above the subsistence level by trades unions, legislation and education in consumption.

Since all thoughtful Socialists, including Marx and Engels, have recognized the possibility of modification of the law of wages through social forces, Spargo has denied the existence of the "iron law."¹ It must not be forgotten, on the other hand, that, like some other German notions now discarded in Germany, Lassalle's law of wages, with or without its figurative title, has not disappeared entirely among American Socialists. In the party discussion or the propaganda pamphlet one may still see references to the iron law or the subsistence minimum of wages, and such broad statements as this from Eugene V. Debs:—

"All the wealth the vast army of labor produces above its subsistence is taken by the machine-owning capitalists."²

It is evident, however, that Debs, as an active unionist, could not fail to modify his assertion by an acknowledgment of the influence of labor organizations, and it is generally true that every Socialist will, when pressed for a definition, make similar

¹ Spargo, *Socialism*, p. 201. Cf. Cohen, *op. cit.*, p. 37.

² *Unionism and Socialism*, p. 33.

reservations. Except, then, as the truism that the minimum of subsistence must in the long run form the *lower* limit of wages, the "iron law" is fast ceasing to figure in the Socialist vocabulary.

The Socialist claim as to the existence of surplus value does not depend of necessity upon the Marxian labor theory.¹ Hobson evolves a surplus value made up of varying elements; and entrepreneur's profits, in so far as these are distinct from insurance, interest, and wages of ability, may be identified with the surplus value of Marx.²

The distribution of the annual product in the United States bears out roughly the hypothesis assumed by Marx, about 60% going to labor of all kinds and 40% to capital and entrepreneurs as such.³ Says Le Rossignol: —

"One might not be far wrong in saying that for every dollar paid to the wage-earner, another dollar goes to the capitalist in the form of rent, interest, and profits."⁴

Whether this approximate 40% may be termed surplus value in the strictly Marxian sense depends, aside from the matter of entrepreneur's profits noted above, upon the Socialist claim as to the unproductivity of capital. If labor has created the whole value, then Marx is right and a large share has been mulcted from the worker; but, if capital is a really creative agent in industry, the present distribution must be granted as a necessary consequence of the private ownership of capital. The question then be-

¹ Spargo, Karl Marx, p. 328.

² Economics of Distrib., p. 353, *seq.*

³ Spahr, p. 120; Prof. John B. Clark.

⁴ P. 35, *op. cit.*

comes, not, "Is the profit of the capitalist a surplus value extracted solely from the product of labor?" but, "Is there social advantage in the private ownership of capital, which has the power to create value without exertion on the part of its owner?"

As has already been noted, the controversies as to Marxian theory in the United States are seldom based upon differences of interpretation, still more rarely upon propositions of revision, but usually upon the problem as to the place of theory in the Socialist movement. The discussion seldom threatens the preaching of economic determinism or the class struggle, as these doctrines, while acknowledged by all as the basis of Socialism, can easily be presented concretely to a working-class audience. The surplus value theory, on the other hand, except in the form just mentioned, is realized by many members of the party to be non-essential to scientific Socialism, as well as most difficult of comprehension by a mind unused to philosophical subtleties. Victor Berger, the constructivist, is one of those who advocate the relegation of theory to the scholars of the movement; Boudin, on the other hand, who represents a certain section among New York Socialists, insists upon sound theory as a prerequisite for sound action, and recommends the pure Marxian doctrines for propaganda in both the public meeting and the party press.¹

To sum up the chapter: American Socialists usually ignore the labor theory of value in their platforms and propaganda, but they have never repu-

¹ L. B. Boudin, N. Y. Call, Feb. 5, April 12, 1910.

diated it, and in their doctrinal writings go no further than to modify it in unessential points; the iron law of wages, on the other hand, is denied by careful Socialists; the general contention that the capitalist class receives in the form of interest and profits a surplus value representing the difference between the wages and the product constitutes a conspicuous part of Socialist propaganda, being defended less by theory than by citations of the facts of industry.

The American Socialist Party, then, is Marxian in its refusal to repudiate the labor theory of value, but for practical purposes it substitutes for the abstract doctrine a concrete statement as to the relation of wages and profit. The tendency thus indicated is vigorously opposed by certain Socialists of influence, and it is in the general controversy as to the place of theory in the movement, rather than in any material differences as to interpretation or revision, that the pure Marxian doctrines are a matter of discussion among American Socialists to-day.

It can hardly be gainsaid that in their very refusal to lay stress upon theory the majority of the American party are in accord with the spirit of Marx as shown in his own life and in such utterances as his letter on the Gotha program. Says Spargo:—

“Marx was far from adopting the doctrinaire attitude common to many of his disciples. His aim was to create a powerful movement of the workers, not a cult or sect bound to fixed dogmas.”¹

We must bear in mind, moreover, that, even on the theoretical side, it is not upon the pure economics

¹ John Spargo, Karl Marx, His Life and Work, p. 278.

of *Capital*, but upon the economic interpretation, class struggle, and break-down doctrines of the *Communist Manifesto*, combined with a criticism of the concrete facts of industry, that the Socialist movement is consciously based in this country.

CHAPTER VII

THE THEORY OF CRISES

THE national program of the Socialist Party contains the following paragraphs:—

“In spite of the organization of trusts, pools, and combinations, the capitalists are powerless to regulate production for social ends. Industries are largely conducted in a planless manner. Through periods of feverish activity the strength and health of the workers are mercilessly used up, and during periods of enforced idleness the workers are frequently reduced to starvation.

“The climaxes of this system of production are the regularly recurring industrial depressions and crises which paralyze the nation every fifteen or twenty years.”¹

As in the *Communist Manifesto*, the capitalist system is given sole responsibility for the industrial and commercial crisis. Unlike the *Communist Manifesto*, however, the Socialist Party here makes the crisis depend wholly upon the general doctrine worked out by Engels of the planlessness of capitalist production, ignoring completely the elaborate additional theory of the special cause of overproduction due to the enforced abstinence of the laborers.²

¹ P. 3.

² Com. Man., p. 16; Engels, *Socialism, Utopian and Scientific*, p.

In the unofficial utterances of the Socialist press we find the attitude of the platform borne out. The *New York Call* gives the following cause for the crisis: —

“the stupendous development of the productive forces of society, which have remained under private ownership and control; the fact that goods are produced, not for the use of the producers, but for sale — often for distant markets, the enormous extension of the markets, both at home and abroad, so that it has become impossible for private interests to have a clear view of their needs and requirements, and the total absence of any regulation by society over its productive forces, the prevalence of an *anarchy in production*, so that one branch of production may be overproducing while another branch of production may be under-producing.”¹

There are but few American leaders who still include the special explanation of Marx and Robertus in their propaganda, while some Socialists, including W. J. Ghent and Wm. English Walling, refuse to give it a place any longer in the doctrine of scientific Socialism. Although Spargo, in his propaganda book, *Common Sense of Socialism*, gives briefly the entire Marxian theory, in his more scientific work, *Socialism*, his only mention of the crisis is to note that Owen agrees with the Marxists in his explanation of it.²

Robert Hunter quotes from Engels a descriptive paragraph in which the crisis is explained chiefly by the general principle of anarchy in production, and

¹ N. Y. Call, Aug. 13, 1909.

² Spargo, *Common Sense of Socialism*, p. 76; *Socialism*, p. 34-36.

devotes his own following discussion entirely to that principle.¹

Hillquit ignores the subject of crises altogether in his recent book, while in his minority report on the platform and in his report to the International Socialist Bureau in 1908 he assigns the cause of the crisis generally to the present planlessness of production and inequity of distribution.² In the resulting discussion of the national committee a member so far modifies primitive Marxism as to make the statement: "Each and every panic that has occurred has not the same basis." ²

An explanation of this modern departure from the classical theory is given by Lucien Sanial, the veteran statistician, who has long been the acknowledged authority on the crisis among American Socialists. According to Mr. Sanial, the industrial crisis, caused by overproduction, was a phenomenon of the competitive stage of capitalism. Marx's theory was a valid explanation, therefore, of all crises until 1880. Since that time we have entered upon the stage of concentration in capitalism, when the cause of the crisis is no longer industrial, but commercial and financial. The investigator must now seek for the factors which in the course of economic evolution have so developed as to modify the financial and commercial circumstances; he will then find only a partial and constantly less adequate explanation of each successive crisis in the overproduction theory of Marx.

The entire Marxian theory still appears in a few propaganda volumes, such as Leffingwell's *Easy*

¹ Socialists at Work, p. 160.

² Weekly Bull., Feb. 15 and 22, Mar. 7, 1908.

Lessons in Socialism.¹ Untermann, also, in *Marxian Economics*, while analyzing the crisis upon the basis of industrial anarchy, includes the following statement of the overproduction theory:—

“On the other hand, the keeping of wages at the lowest level of subsistence threatens periodically to wreck the entire capitalist system, because the working people are the principal consumers, and they cannot begin to absorb the immense quantity of goods made by them as the productivity of labor increases, for the simple reason that their wages, even if permanently above the average . . . are an equivalent for but a small part of the total value of the social product.”²

Among the present-day Americans to place emphasis upon the overproduction explanation are L. B. Boudin, R. R. La Monte, and Gaylord Wilshire. The first of these writers, taking the opposite view from Mr. Sanial, contends that, although the anarchy of production is being so modified as to render each crisis less acute, though more lasting, than the previous one, yet the difficulty of overproduction can never be overcome under capitalism, but only temporarily checked by the imperialist conquest of foreign markets.³

Mr. Wilshire has elevated the crisis theory into a cardinal doctrine, and exults over the fact that he predicted the catastrophe of 1907 at least a year in advance, when the general press was loud in its proclamation of prosperity.⁴ When the blow fell, that writer announced the beginning of the final struggle

¹ Op. cit., p. 13.

² Op. cit., p. 234.

³ Op. cit., p. 233, *seq.*

⁴ Wilshire Editorials, p. 254.

of capitalism; but both he and Mr. La Monte are now pointing to the vast military expenditures of the world as the artificial outlet for industrial overproduction which, by affording the "outside stimulus" mentioned by Professor Veblen, may bring the present system a new though temporary lease of life.¹

It must not be forgotten that the majority of American Socialists, while ignoring the special theory of overproduction due to the exploitation of the workers, are not repudiating it, but emphasizing in its stead the doctrine of which it forms a part, that of the anarchy of production. Those who, with Mr. Sanial, seek a new explanation for each recurrence of the disaster, look for these solutions in the different phases of capitalist anarchy.

That these differences of opinion are of negligible consequence to American Socialism is indicated by the fact that ideas upon the crisis correspond to none of the tactical divisions of the party. Ghent and Walling, who represent the opposite categories of constructivist and revolutionist, of which more hereafter, have laid aside the Marxian theory in this matter, while La Monte and Wilshire, two others whose notions rarely coincide, are its vigorous supporters. The Party press and lecture platform are entirely free from controversy on the subject, and there is apparent a general readiness to leave the details of the overproduction doctrine to private judgment, while accepting the explanation of the crisis from industrial anarchy as sufficient for propaganda purposes.

¹ La Monte in N. Y. Call, Aug. 17, 1909; see also Veblen, *Theory of Business Enterprise*, p. 254, 393.

With a few exceptions, then, the American Socialists seem to have travelled far toward a readiness to abandon the explanation of the crisis by means of a special theory of overproduction for the general Marxian doctrine of industrial anarchy. While certain writers pass over the whole subject, others, including the framers of the national platform, emphasize only the more comprehensive explanation, while still others deny the adequacy of the overproduction theory for the present stage of economic development. In spite of the differences of opinion among Socialists, the crisis theory is not a subject of dispute in the American party. In so far as the anarchy of capitalist production is accepted as the general cause of the financial and commercial crisis, moreover, there is no substantial ground for disagreement among Socialists and non-socialists. The chief point of difference is as to the degree of this industrial anarchy, its inherence in the present system, and the practicability of putting a stop to it without undue restriction of the individual.

CHAPTER VIII

THE BREAKDOWN OF THE CAPITALIST SYSTEM

THE culmination of the Marxian economics is in the final breakdown of the capitalist system. As the economic interpretation of history and the class struggle become distinctively Socialist doctrines only when employed to prove the existence of destructive forces within the present society, so the analysis of production in the surplus value and crisis theories has been applied to the support of scientific socialism, not because of any ethical principles therein contained, but because this analysis brings abstract economics to the support of history in demonstrating these catastrophic tendencies.

As a philosophical dogma, the inevitable breakdown of capitalism depends upon the Hegelian evolutionary theory that every institution contains within itself the seeds of its own dissolution. The extent to which the Hegelian doctrine has penetrated the working class movement of America is shown in the following passage from an address of Eugene V. Debs:—

“Underlying society there are great material forces which are in operation all of the circling hours of the day and night, and at certain points in the social development these forces outgrow the forms

that hold them, and these forms spring apart and then a new social system comes into existence and a new era dawns for the human race.”¹

As an economic conclusion the breakdown idea is a deduction, according to the principles of economic determinism, from the observed tendencies of present industry, supported by the analysis of production in Marx's pure economics. The general notion of an impending fall of capitalism is not confined wholly to Socialists. Professor Veblen looks forward to the decay of the regime of business enterprise, and individualist reformers frequently argue that Nemesis must be propitiated by income and inheritance taxes before doom overtakes our institutions.² The revolutionary completeness of the change, however, and its character of proletarian socialization are distinctive of the Socialist philosophy, depending directly upon the Marxian economic theories.

About the doctrine of breakdown, or, in its extreme form, of cataclysm, center most of the attacks of the Revisionists, the school of Socialist moderates before mentioned, who, under the leadership of the German Bernstein, aroused great controversy a few years ago as to the advisability of revising the Marxian theories. While these are true Socialists in their acceptance of the coming change, and in their deduction of it from the principles laid down by Marx and Engels, they take exception to the inevitability of the transformation, and hesitate to term it a revolution because of the implied associations of violence and suddenness. The controversy is of more than academic importance in that the Revision-

¹ The Issue, p. 5.

² Veblen, *Theory of Business Enterprise*, p. 394, *seq.*

ists, because of their denial of the inevitable revolution, tend toward measures that shall gradually build up the Socialist state under the forms of present society rather than those which aim chiefly to organize and strengthen the proletariat for the coming cataclysm. They are thus constructive rather than revolutionary in their tactics, and are even charged by their opponents with opportunism in attempting to coöperate with the political forces of the bourgeoisie.

The doctrine of inevitability in its absolute form is defenseless against the Revisionists. It must share the fate of the deterministic philosophy of which it is a part, impregnable in logic, but impossible in application. The deadlock of fatalism can be avoided only by the admission of the element of free human action, and where this exists there can be no inevitability. Marx and his followers have recognized this limitation more or less, according as the policy of each has tended to the practical or the doctrinaire, and the Revisionists mark only the extreme development of the former tendency. The degree of this recognition is to be found at the bottom of all tactical Socialist divisions, as has before been indicated.

Both points of view are found in American Socialism. The course of human thought, says a writer in the *New York Call*,

“is not controlled by politicians; . . . its progress cannot be checked by man. Men will be carried along in its next leap forward and the ostensible leaders will be created by the same mysterious forces that inspired the movement.”¹

The Appeal to Reason maintains in similar fashion that Socialism is inevitable as the next logical form

¹ Nov. 25, 1909.

of human association, and will come even if the Socialists themselves should oppose it; and a national committeeman pins his faith to Hegelianism, declaring that we should be without hope, were it not that the present system contains within itself its own destruction.¹

W. J. Ghent, on the contrary, designates the belief in inevitable catastrophe as "a fond faith," and points out, as does Jack London also, the possibility of oligarchy rather than Socialism, in the absence of rightly directed action by the working class.²

Isador Ladoff writes:

"History does not support the faith of the Socialists of the old school that capitalism is bound to work out, mechanically so to speak, its own destruction and then to be replaced automatically by socialism, even in case no conscientious and conscious endeavor to work in that direction exists on the part of the members of society."³

Spargo opposes especially the idea of a sudden and violent cataclysm often credited to Marx:—

"Those who are familiar with the writings of Marx know that, in strange contrast with the fundamental principles of that theory of social evolution which he so well developed, he lapsed at times into the Utopian habit of predicting the sudden transformation of society. Capitalism was to end in a great final 'catastrophe' and the new order be born in the travail of a 'social revolution.'"⁴

¹ Appeal, Mar. 23, 1907; Weekly Bull., Feb. 15, 29, 1908.

² Op. cit., p. 151.

³ Ghent, *Our Benevolent Feudalism*, p. 180; London, *The Iron Heel*, p. xi.

⁴ Socialism, Revised Ed., p. 324; see also *Sidelights on Contemporary Socialism*, p. 47.

In general, Socialist opinion is tending to acknowledge the importance of conscious human action as an element in the downfall of capitalism. A National Committee discussion brings out the doctrine that majority action will be brought about not by economic necessity alone, but by the conscious perception both of the necessity and of the means of meeting it.¹ The acknowledgment by Marx and his followers of ideas as effective, though secondary factors in evolution, leads unavoidably to a modification of the notion of inevitability by that of free will. The *New York Worker*, the predecessor of the present *New York Call*, reproduced the well-known effort of Marx to harmonize these contradictory elements: —

“One nation can and should learn from others. And even when a society has got the right track for the discovery of the natural laws of its movement, it can neither clear by bold leaps, nor remove by legal enactments, the obstacles offered by the successive phases of its normal development. But it can shorten and lessen the birth pangs.”²

The doctrine of an automatic cataclysm has found its chief support in the overproduction theory, the latter being supposed to point to a final stupendous crisis, when, the limit to commercial expansion in foreign countries having been reached,³ capitalism will fall by the weight of its plethora of wealth. Boudin, however, refuses even in his defense of the crisis theory to admit what he calls this “mechanical conception of history,” and maintains that the revolution will come long before the impossibility of con-

¹ Weekly Bull., May 9, 1908.

² June 22, 1907.

³ Leffingwell, op. cit., p. 14.

tinuing capitalist production brings on a physical catastrophe.¹

As the crisis theory tends to be relegated to a subordinate place in present-day Socialism, the prophecy of the fall of capitalism is more and more modified by the factor of human choice. Notwithstanding this modification, however, there is no retirement by American Socialists from the prediction of economic necessity. The ultimate downfall of capitalism is to be brought about by the process of its own inevitable development, through the influences of the concentration of industry, the proletarianization of the middle classes, and the increasing exploitation of the workers.

The technical side of the process appears in the concentration of capital, and it is in this form that the breakdown of capitalism is presented in the Socialist Party platform.²

“The basis for such transformation is rapidly developing within present capitalist society. The factory system, with its complex machinery and minute division of labor, is rapidly destroying all vestiges of individual production in manufacture. Modern production is already very largely a collective and social process. The great trusts and monopolies which have sprung up in recent years have organized the work and management of the principal industries on a national scale, and have fitted them for collective use and operation.”³

The Revisionists direct their chief criticism against the doctrines of concentration and proletarianization.

¹ Op. cit., p. 253.

² Boudin, op. cit., p. 218.

³ Nat. Platform, p. 4.

With regard to the former, they have alleged that the process of concentration, though existing, is far slower than anticipated by Marx, and that the small shop and farm are likely to survive indefinitely.

In *Marxism versus Socialism* Professor Simkhovitch has dealt exhaustively with these Revisionist charges. He has pointed out that Marx and Engels, in common with most revolutionists, tended to allow too little for the complication of social forces, and so exaggerated the rapidity of capitalist evolution.¹ In the domain of agriculture he shows that the moderate-sized farm is holding its own in both Europe and America, and is likely to continue doing so until the limit of intensive cultivation has been reached.² Forty years after Marx's prediction, moreover, the small industry still survives, and we see strong counter-forces in industry opposed to centralization.³ Many industries prosper best on a small scale, ministering to local needs or specialized tastes, and these tend to multiply with education and progress in the arts; the bonanza farms, so widely heralded by the last generation of Socialists, are acknowledged to be adapted only to special conditions; the twentieth century force, electricity, by its capacity of transmission to numberless minor establishments, may prove important in checking centralization; and lastly, the recent awakening of the people to the dangers of concentration has already, by railroad regulation, anti-trust laws, and other measures of government control, begun to turn the current back again toward competition.

The specific claims of the Revisionists are no longer

¹ Op. cit., XXIII, p. 211; see also Spargo, Karl Marx, p. 329.

² Ibid., p. 669.

³ Ibid., p. 660.

denied by the more scientific American Socialists. The prophecy of *Capital* as to the annihilation of the peasant has given way to an acknowledgment of the persistence of the small farmer, with a far-reaching effect, to be shown later, upon the tactics of the movement. Boudin makes no defense of Marx in his evident miscalculation of the rapidity of concentration, saying only that Marx's opinion on the subject was never explicitly stated, and if so would form no integral part of his system.¹

Spargo admits the increase of petty industries, and the survival of the small shopkeeper; and speaks of the Socialist who "opposes the propaganda of Socialism among farmers, because he is obsessed by the mistaken generalization of Marx that the small farmer is rapidly becoming extinct, in spite of all the evidence to the contrary."² A. M. Simons and Carl Thompson also follow Kautsky and Vandervelde in giving a long lease of life to the small farmer.³

On the other hand, there is no apparent tendency among American Socialists to acknowledge the need of revision in the prophecy of concentration. The possible miscalculation of time on Marx's part does not affect the statement of the tendency, and the sporadic survival of the small establishment does not disprove the fact of general concentration. In the expression, "centralization of the means of production and socialization of labor," Marx does not, according to his modern followers, signify the absolute

¹ Op. cit., p. 192.

² Spargo, *Sidelights, etc.*, p. 30; *Socialism, Revised*, p. 121; see also Karl Marx, p. 351, and *The Substance of Socialism*, p. 85.

³ Simons, *The American Farmer*, p. 8, 2nd Ed.; Thompson, op. cit., pp. 64, 66; Kautsky, *Die Agrarfrage*, p. 440; Vandervelde, op. cit., pp. 78-79.

disappearance of the small industry, but rather such a tendency toward concentration of capital in unified systems and such a massing of laborers in interdependent production as is incompatible with the private ownership and control of industry.¹

Whatever may be the present tendencies in Europe, the apparent course of industrial development in this continent is such as to confirm the American Socialist in his adherence to the doctrine of concentration in the sense just described. Our statistics show that, while the independent establishment has by no means disappeared, the decentralizing forces have failed so far to counteract those in the opposite direction.

“The method of presentation by averages,” says the 12th Census, “which includes all the small establishments with the great ones, fails to give any true conception of the extent to which the total value of the product comes from a comparatively small number of establishments, the operatives of which are numbered by the thousand. The tendency toward concentration appears to be most marked in the iron and steel industry. . . . During the last half-century, the average iron and steel establishment has increased its capital 18fold, the number of wage-earners 5fold, the amount paid in wages 12fold, and the value of the product 27fold. . . . On the other hand, there are certain industries for which the statistics reveal no such tendency toward concentration,” such as the flouring and grist mill industry. “It is a fact well within public knowledge, however, that the flour milling industry shows as pronounced a tendency toward concentration into large establishments as does any other branch of manufacture.”²

¹ Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I. p. 789. ² 12th Census, Vol. VII. p. lxxii.

While it is true that in 1900 about one-half the industrial establishments of the United States contained less than 5 employés each, yet it is equally undeniable that over one-half the *workers* were employed in establishments with more than fifty others, and the statistics from the point of view of the worker show two means, one in establishments numbering 5 to 20, but the other in those numbering 101 to 250 wage-earners.¹ While, moreover, the number of industrial establishments increased from 1890 to 1900 nearly twice as fast as the number of wage-earners, this period was an exceptional one, for no other period since 1870 shows a greater percentage of increase for the former than for the latter, and from 1900 to 1905 the growth of establishments was only about $\frac{1}{4}$ as rapid as that of the workers.² At the latter date 71.6% of the wage-earners were employed in establishments averaging 162 employés and only 9.6% in those establishments termed in the census "inconsiderable," — with a gross product under \$20,000.³

We must go farther, however, than statistics as to the number of industrial and agricultural establishments in examining the Marxian claim of centralization and socialization. "The constantly diminishing number of the magnates of capital" is the item justly italicized by Professor Simkhovitch, and the magnitude of control, rather than establishment, is the true criterion of centralization in the Marxian sense.⁴ As the same writer brings out, the policy of

¹ Twelfth Census, Manufactures, pt. 1, p. lxxiii; Ibid., Vol. VII. pt. 1, p. lxxiii.

² Special Census of Manufactures, 1905, pt. I, p. xxxvi.

³ Ibid., p. cxiv.

⁴ Op. cit., Vol. XXIII. p. 681.

the trust is frequently to maintain the smaller industrial organizations in nominal independence; but centralization of control by the magnates of capital is not thereby hindered. The question is not, "Has the number of shops manufacturing steel or cigars increased either absolutely or relatively?" but, "Has the number of magnates controlling the steel and tobacco industries increased relatively to the growth of population and production?" While the former question is of importance as affecting the organization of the working-class, the latter alone relates directly to the concentration of capitalistic control.

The statistics as to corporate control in the United States, though incomplete, bring out clearly the rapid growth of the concentration of this control in the industrial combination. While American Socialists are strongly influenced by such unofficial statistics as those of Moody and Sereno Pratt, they find these figures generally harmonious with those of the official census.

Professor Seligman writes:—

"According to the census of 1900 there were 185 combinations, representing 2040 plants and turning out products of the value of \$1,667,350, a little over 14% of the total industrial output of the United States. But since 1900 the movement has progressed rapidly. In 1900 there were 16 combinations each with a capital of over \$50,000,000 and with an aggregate capital of \$1,231,000,000. In 1907, . . . not only were there 27 such combinations with an aggregate capital 3 times as great, but a single combination now had a larger capital than the 16

combinations, and about $\frac{1}{2}$ as large as all the 185 combinations in 1900.”¹

Furthermore, while Socialists in America have yielded the persistence of the small farmer, they are not ready to see in this circumstance the survival of the independent yeoman. As Professor Seligman points out, the recent decrease in farm areas may be less indicative of the continuance of the small farmer than of the increase of land values which causes a given capital to represent a constantly diminishing acreage.² Less than $\frac{1}{2}$ the American farms in 1890 were owned clear of encumbrance; and, while we have no parallel figures for 1900, we know that between the two census years the percentage of farms operated by owners or part owners fell from 71.6 to 64.7, the complete owners, subject to mortgage or otherwise, numbering at the later date only 54.9% of the whole number of farmers.³ Furthermore, the present-day farmer is seldom, as formerly, the seller of a finished product, for, except in the case of the suburban market-gardener, he must always depend on the powers of transportation, storage, and the stock market for the time and place utility without which his crops are worthless. As in the case of capital, the question is not, “Is the number of farms decreasing?” but, “Is agricultural capital controlled by a smaller or a larger number of men than formerly?”

As a result of the indications thus apparent, the American Socialist writers are unanimous in their declaration of a tendency toward concentration.

¹ Principles of Economics, p. 342.

² Ibid., p. 336.

³ Comp. of 11th Census, p. 1063; Ibid., pt. III, p. 590; 12th Census, Vol. V., Agric., pt. I, p. lxvi.

Hillquit writes: —

“In the merciless war of competition the big capitalist enterprises are gradually extinguishing the smaller independent concerns. Our ‘national’ wealth and principal industries concentrate in the hands of ever fewer combines.”¹

Closely connected with the doctrine of the concentration of capital is that of the proletarianization of the population.

“Here,” according to Professor Simkhovitch, “is the core of Marxian socialism. Not only is the middle class gradually being wiped out, but the lesser capitalists are gradually being reduced to proletarian existences, swallowed up by the greater capitalists.”²

The Revisionists attack this doctrine along with that of concentration, supporting it by statistics as to the increase in the number of moderate incomes, by the contention already noted as to the survival of the small farm and industry, and by the fact that the corporation, while a form of concentration, produces a counter-force in the dissemination of income.³

As a rule the American Socialist, instead of disputing these statements, denies their applicability to Marx’s contention. It appears that there is a general misunderstanding between the Revisionists and the Marxians on the subject of proletarianization. The proletariat is defined by Marx and Engels as a class of laborers who live only so long as they can find work, and who find work only so long as their labor

¹ Socialism in Theory and Practice, p. 6.

² Op. cit., Vol. XXIII. p. 680.

³ Bernstein, quoted *ibid.*, p. 686, 688, etc.

increases capital.¹ Not the quality of poverty, therefore, absolute or relative, but that of dependence upon employment by others is the mark of proletarianization. The capitalist is clearly the possessor of capital, that which allows him an income without labor on his part. The middle class must therefore consist of those who are neither possessors of capital nor dependent upon employment, — namely, the independent craftsmen, farmers, and professional persons, — and those who are both possessors of capital and dependent upon employment, this class including many of the better paid employés. As certain of the latter, such as the workman with a small bank account, have a preponderating interest on the proletarian side, and others, such as the salaried man who will soon retire on his investments, naturally range themselves with the capitalists, only those whose incomes are approximately balanced between interest and wages may be counted with the independent workers as of the middle class. This class is distinguished, therefore, not by the amount of its income, but by its source, in the same way that the proletariat is marked not by poverty but by dependence upon employment.

The Revisionist usually approaches the subject through income statistics, showing either that as a result of the corporation there exist many small capitalist incomes, or that, owing in part doubtless to the increased requirements of technical training, the professional income is often large. Such statistics, however, have no direct bearing upon the question at issue, which is not, "Is the proportion of moderate incomes increasing or decreasing?" but, "Is

¹ Com. Man., p. 16.

the proportion increasing or decreasing of those incomes which are derived either from independent labor or from capital and wages in equal portions? ”

The question of fact cannot be settled until we have adequate statistics recognizing categories equivalent to capitalist, middle class, and proletarian. The only available estimates at present are those of the American Marxian Lucien Sanial; and these seem to support the Revisionist position in showing a slight though steady percentage of increase in both capitalist and middle classes from 1870 to 1890, with a corresponding decrease in the proletariat. A decidedly opposite tendency which appears for the next decade is due at least in part to a change in classification.¹ Although these figures are based carefully upon United States census reports, the deficiencies of the latter in classification render the conclusions confessedly approximate. The present census is making a decided improvement in its details as to “employers,” “workers,” and “working on own account,” but these should be supplemented by information as to capitalists, as this class is not synonymous with that of employers. Until such series are at hand, the discussion of the proletarianization of the middle class must be without a firm basis.

The third economic force working for the fall of capitalism is the increasing exploitation of the workers. The crude form of the doctrine, known as the theory of increasing misery, and predicting the progressive pauperization of the masses until rebellion is inevitable, is repudiated by the Socialist leaders of both Europe and America, and by them for Marx

¹ Sanial, *Socialist Almanac*, p. 100-104; *Socialist Poster*, No. 1.

and Engels.¹ The attributing of the extreme form of the doctrine to the Marxians is doubtless due in part to the misunderstanding before noted, that of taking poverty, rather than exploitation by an employer, as the characteristic quality of the proletariat. Marx made clear, however, as early as 1849, that even under a régime of rising real wages the ratio of exploitation would, according to his theory, still increase, and that the progressive degradation of the proletariat would be due not to poverty but to a gradual widening of the social gulf and strengthening of the dependence of labor upon capital.²

“It follows, therefore,” says Marx later on, “that in proportion as capital accumulates, the lot of the laborer, be his payment high or low, must grow worse.”³

Except, accordingly, in a toning down of their figures of speech, the American Socialists, in substituting increasing exploitation for increasing misery, have not modified the theories of Marx. Hillquit expresses as follows the doctrine as held to-day:

“The condition of this favored class of the working population is one of absolute improvement but of relative deterioration. And side by side with the more fortunate strata of the working class there are the large masses of laborers whose conditions of life have greatly deteriorated, absolutely as well as relatively.”⁴

¹ Kautsky, *Morrow of the Social Revolution*, p. 18; Ensor, *op. cit.*; p. 187, 189; Hillquit, *Socialism in Theory and Practice*, p. 6.

² *Wage Labor and Capital*, p. 18, 19, 23.

³ *Capital*, Vol. I. p. 661.

⁴ Hillquit, *Socialism in Theory and Practice*, p. 6.

The absolute improvement conceded by Hillquit is illustrated by Professor Simkhovitch in his statistics of the rise in nominal and real wages in various countries, and by T. S. Adams, in his table showing a steady, though slight decrease in the average hours of labor since 1840.¹ While there are not wanting Socialists to quote Thorold Rogers as authority that the condition of the workers is absolutely inferior to that of six centuries ago, all acknowledge a marked improvement over the days immediately following the industrial revolution, even though ascribing much of the absolute betterment to such deliberately socialistic measures as the Factory Acts.²

The relative deterioration which Hillquit alleges may be considered in two ways, as relative to the wealth of the capitalist class, — a ratio measuring roughly from the Socialist point of view the degree of exploitation, — and as relative to the standard of living of the workers themselves.

American Socialists base their belief in relative deterioration in the former sense to some extent upon such unofficial figures as those of Mr. Spahr, but chiefly upon the statistics of wealth compiled by Lucien Sanial from the United States census reports. A comparison of the estimates of Mr. Sanial in his *Socialist Almanac*, based upon the eleventh census, and his *Socialist Posters*, based upon the twelfth, shows that while the percentage of proletarians among occupied persons increased from 66.26 to 70.1 (owing in part to a difference in classification), their

¹ Simkhovitch, *op. cit.*, Vol. XXIV. p. 258, *seq.*; Adams and Sumner, *Labor Problems*, p. 518.

² Ensor, p. 189; Hillquit, *op. cit.*, p. 214, *seq.*; G. B. Shaw, *Fabian Essays*, p. 191.

share of the national wealth showed a slight decline from 4.21% to 4.2%.¹

While a different conclusion is arrived at by T. S. Adams, who states as a probability "that the distribution of wealth is becoming less rather than more unequal," Professor Adams's figures labor under the same disadvantage as Mr. Sanial's, — that of being based upon accumulations of wealth rather than upon income.² It is impossible to measure the share of the proletariat in this way, however, since the proletarians by definition possess no accumulated wealth of sufficient amount to afford them an income. Professor Adams's statistics as to the equalization of land holdings and estates admitted to probate have little bearing upon the relative position of the working class, if we accept as even approximately correct the computation of Chas. B. Spahr that of 12079 men over 25 years old who died in New York in 1893, only about one fourth left any property of sufficient importance to pass through the surrogate's office.³

Until we have a complete series of statistics as to the income, rather than the wealth, of the three economic classes, we cannot settle conclusively the question of the share of the proletariat relatively to that of the capitalists.

The condition of the better portion of wage-earners as compared with their standard of living is less difficult to appraise, as local statistics are here of value.

The 152 family budgets taken by Professor Adams

¹ Socialist Almanac, p. 100, 104; Socialist Poster, No. 1.

² Labor Problems, p. 535.

³ Concentration of Wealth, p. 56, note.

as representing those of the more prosperous working people show that, although real wages had risen considerably from 1875 to 1902, the average yearly surplus per family had decreased from \$24.72 to \$16.18. In only 25 out of the 152 cases was the head of the family able to meet expenses unaided, and, although child labor had practically disappeared since the earlier period, more than one-third of the wives were now engaged in gainful occupations, as against one thirty-third in 1875.¹ In 47 cases, moreover, nearly one third of the whole number, the combined earnings of the family were not sufficient to make both ends meet without external assistance. Still confining his statements to the better class of male workers in city manufactories, Professor Adams concludes that at least one-half of these workers earned in 1900 less than \$480. The 1905 Census of Manufactures gives the wages of the median group of men wage-earners for the country and also for New York State as from \$10 to \$12, the yearly income, allowing nothing for idleness, thus amounting to from \$520 to \$624.² Viewing these figures in the light of the recent computation of the living standard for the Manhattan family at \$825 a year, it would seem that, after allowing 10% for increase in prices and differences in locality, there remains a deficiency of approximately one to two hundred dollars.³

The wage schedule of the Interborough Rapid Transit Company, which went into effect February 1st, 1910, in avowed recognition of the higher cost of living, may throw some light on conditions in New

¹ Labor Problems, p. 525, quoted from Mass. Bureau of Statistics of Labor.

² Census of Manufactures, 1905, Earnings of Wage-Earners, p. 36.

³ Chapin, *op. cit.*, p. 245, *seq.*, 281.

York City. This schedule includes certain of the conductors, and all of the trainmen, gatemen, ticket agents, platform men, train clerks, and hand switchmen. It shows a range of from \$1.80 to \$2.60 per day, averaging \$2.24, — \$13.54 for a week of 6 days and \$704.08 for a full year's work, allowing nothing for illness; for the highest grade of \$2.60 per day this rises to \$811.20, still something under the minimum standard of living for Manhattan.¹

As to the lower stratum of the working-class, mentioned by Hillquit as being in a condition of absolute deterioration, there is little definite information. Hovering as it does always about the minimum of subsistence, there is hardly room for deterioration in its condition, and any such change for the worse as Hillquit speaks of can be taken only as referring to the numbers of this class relatively to the population. Such figures are difficult to procure, owing to the lack of interest in the subject until recent years.

The Socialist authority on this matter in America is Robert Hunter, who eight years ago estimated ten millions of the American people to be in a condition of poverty, interpreted as lack of the necessities for efficient life.² Although this calculation has been criticised as partisan and inaccurate, nothing more satisfactory has been produced in this country, and it agrees fairly well with the English figures of Booth and Rowntree, quoted by Professor Adams. While Hunter estimates that ten millions, or about 12½% of the comparatively prosperous American people, are in poverty, Booth applies this designation to 30% of the London population, and Rowntree's figures of

¹ N. Y. Call, — verified and corrected at Interborough office.

² Poverty, p. 60, 62.

10% for York are amended to 20% by Professor Adams.¹

Statistics as to pauperism and unemployment may throw some light upon the proportion of those below the poverty line to the whole community. The figures as to the former show that the proportion of almshouse paupers to the 100,000 has steadily fallen from 132 in 1880 to 116.6 in 1890, and 101.4 in 1903, but these need to be materially modified in view of the increasing number of benevolent institutions.² In 1890 the inmates of these numbered 178.7 to the 100,000, and the number of such persons nearly doubled between that year and 1904.³

"A gradual segregation has been going on," says the Special Report on Paupers in Almshouses, "and thousands who formerly would have sought the almshouse as the only refuge are being distributed among hospitals for the sick or the insane, schools for the feeble-minded or the deaf and blind, children's homes, colonies for epileptics, and a multitude of variously named benevolent institutions. . . . More adequate legislation governing almshouses and better methods of administration have also contributed toward a diminution of the almshouse population. Finally, recent years have witnessed an extraordinary development of rationally organized charity work. . . . The rise or fall in the ratios of almshouse paupers to the population can only remotely serve as a general index of prevailing distress or prosperity so long as many other factors entering into the problem of poverty remain unknown."⁴

¹ Adams, p. 143, 146, 147; Booth, op. cit., Vol. II. p. 21, 1st series.

² Special Report, Paupers in Almshouses, 1904, p. 5.

³ Census Report on Benevolent Institutions, 1904, p. 11-12.

⁴ Special Report, p. 8, 1904, Paupers in Almshouses; see also Warner, op. cit., p. 141-145.

Professor Adams quotes Mr. Wood, of the Royal Statistical Society, to the effect that unemployment in Great Britain is generally on the increase. He appends a table of ten-year periods which bears out his statement through the year 1889, but neglects to carry the same method through the next decade, when the result would have shown a decrease in unemployment.¹ That Mr. Wood may be correct in his general conclusion, however, is indicated by the recent acute condition of unemployment in England. According to the Royal Commission on the Poor Law and Relief of Distress, there were 31 persons out of every thousand of the population relieved in 1908-9 as against 14 in the previous year, and the number of men applying for relief had risen from 1.9% of the working male population in England and Wales in 1906-7 to 2.1% the next year, and 4.1% the year following.²

The United States Census made no successful effort to obtain statistics of unemployment until 1890, but the percentage of 15.1% of the working population at that time unemployed had increased to 22.3% in 1900, 10.8% of these, or 2.4% of the whole, being without employment for more than one half the year.³

While statistics such as the foregoing are widely influential among American Socialists, it must be remembered that the Marxian doctrine can be neither proved nor disproved by dollars and cents, as it treats of increasing misery, not of increasing poverty. The fall of capitalism is to be due, not to starvation of the masses, but to "accumulation of

¹ Op. cit., p. 521.

² Consular and Trade Reports, Oct. 21, 1909.

³ Twelfth Census, Occupations, p. ccxxv, ccxxxiv.

misery, agony of toil, slavery, ignorance, brutality, mental degradation.”¹ The subject is psychological rather than economic.

Accordingly, the interpretation of the breakdown idea by American Marxians is marked throughout by a substitution of ideological for mechanical forces. While the concentration of industry is counted as technically operative, the proletarianization of the middle classes and the misery of the workers are considered to have their chief effect indirectly, as promoting the revolutionary Socialist ideal.

It is the middle class who both transmit the conceptions of the ruling class to the proletariat and give form to those very conceptions for the whole of society in their function of mental workers. In so far as this class consists on the one hand of independent craftsmen and peasants and on the other of intellectual henchmen of the capitalists, the bourgeois ideals of individualism will tend to dominate even the workers; but if the process of proletarianization gradually transforms these molders of ideas into insurgent victims of capitalism or salaried directors of socialized industry, the revolutionary and Socialist ideals thus created will give definite direction to the vague discontent of the masses below them.

To the Marxian, therefore, the occasional survival of the petty industry is immaterial, provided only that the ideal-creating majority of the middle class be transformed into the intellectual proletariat, capable of inspiring the revolution and organizing the industries of the Socialist commonwealth.

The increasing exploitation of the proletariat, fur-

¹ Capital, Vol. I. p. 661.

thermore, is to produce the catastrophe, not as it drives the worker to starvation, but as it drives him to revolution. "Marx fully realized," writes Professor Simkhovitch, "that poverty as such creates no revolutionary class."¹ The American Socialist, therefore, whether constructive or revolutionary, fights unreservedly on the side of organized labor, without apprehension that improved conditions for the proletariat may defer the day of revolution.

Karl Marx was an active worker for labor unionism, which he termed

"a regular coöperation between employed and unemployed in order to destroy or to weaken the ruinous effects of this natural law of capitalistic production on their class."²

Since, according to the Marxian philosophy, the development of capitalism must inevitably increase the ratio of exploitation, widen the social gulf, and rivet more firmly the chains that bind labor to capital, every absolute advantage in labor conditions must serve only to strengthen the proletariat physically and mentally, and feed their growing desires until discontent becomes greater and greater.

Discontent, however, is not enough. The fate of capitalism must depend ultimately upon the decision of the worker for or against the competitive system, — whether he will choose the possibility of Socialist comfort together with his class, or the chance, small, but often precious, of himself rising into the capitalist class above the heads of his fellows. While Le Rossignol is doubtless superficial in

¹ Op. cit., No. 4, p. 679.

² Capital, Vol. I. p. 655, quoted Ibid., p. 251, No. 3.

his confidence that the workingman may be counted on for conservatism, it is true that individual discontent is as likely to lead the worker toward conservatism as toward revolution, if it does not take the psychological manifestation already designated as "class-consciousness."

The developing organization of labor, as it keeps pace with that of capitalism, is teaching the workingman this consciousness of the identity of his own interest with that of his economic class, at the same time that it gives him the articulated power without which discontent, individual or class-conscious, can never become a revolutionary force.

So far in their interpretation of the fall of capitalism American Marxians are united. The revolution is inevitable, as a result of the technical forces of concentration of capital and massing of labor, and the ideological forces arising from the proletarianization of the middle classes and the increasing exploitation of the workers. The date of the change is wholly uncertain, but before that time there will doubtless be a gradual improvement in the absolute condition of at least a portion of the working class.

At this point, however, the revolutionist and the constructivist, in their varying degrees, diverge from one another. To the extreme revolutionist there will be no steps toward Socialism: the intervening period will be attended with such a socializing process as to bring the great industries under the control of the state, but this movement will be automatic and capitalist rather than conscious and Socialist. When industry thus becomes technically ripe, and at the same time the proletariat, organized by the industrial unions and armed with full political rights, has

reached the point of revolution, the cataclysm will be here, and, while violence is not an essential accompaniment, it is probable that capitalism will not submit without a struggle.

The constructivist, on the other hand, looks less for sudden cataclysm than for gradual reconstruction, as the growing realization of evil on the part of the politically powerful workers tends to bring about modifications in the present system. He looks for revolution rather than reform, in that the entire basis of society is to be changed, but the transformation will resemble the gradual industrial revolution rather than the violent political upheaval. The socializing process in industry is to be consciously utilized by the ballots of the workingmen, in such a way that hand in hand with the gradual expropriation of capital will come the control of production by legislative acts.

Although the writings of Marx are not free from prophecies of a violent cataclysm, and while at first he looked to the proletarian revolution as the only solution of the ten-hour problem,¹ he soon became an active worker for the Factory Acts. In his inaugural address before the International in 1864 he expresses his unrestrained rejoicing over the ten-hour law in such a way as to imply the gradual revolution just described: —

“The struggle for the legal limitation of the working day was the more bitter, because it was not merely a check upon individual greed, but also a direct intervention in the great battle waged between the blind law of supply and demand — the political economy of the bourgeoisie — and the principle of

¹ Simkhovitch, *op. cit.*, No. 3, p. 243.

social regulation of production, which is the quintessence of the political economy of the laboring class. And therefore the ten-hour bill was not only a great practical success, it was the victory of a principle.”¹

The inevitability of the constructivist is thus strongly modified by the idea of conscious political action. J. M. Work puts it in this way: —

“Practically every move made by the capitalist class” convinces “the workingmen that the Socialist ballot is their only hope.”²

Since, moreover, the united proletariat at no time confronts a united capitalism, violence is not a probable accompaniment of the revolution.

“More likely,” according to Hillquit, “the process of transformation will be complicated and diversified, and will be marked by a series of economic and social reforms and legislative measures tending to divest the ruling classes of their monopolies, privileges, and advantages, step by step, until they are practically shorn of their power to exploit their fellow-men; i. e., until all the important means of production have passed into collective ownership and all the principal industries are reorganized on the basis of Socialist coöperation.”³

While American Socialists, then, are unanimous in the belief that our social order is destined to inevitable decay and that a Socialist revolution is being prepared, technically by the process of concentra-

¹ Inaugural Address, quoted by Simkhovitch, *op. cit.*, No. 3, p. 253.

² Work, *op. cit.*, p. 151.

³ Hillquit, *Socialism in Theory and Practice*, p. 101.

tion, ideologically in the proletarianization of the middle classes and the increasing exploitation of the workers, there is a difference of opinion between the right and left of the Socialist Party as to the character of this revolution. While the cataclysm of the one school is to follow a period of automatic socialization and be characterized by a decisive conflict, probably sudden and possibly violent, between the capitalist and proletarian classes, the other looks forward to a long series of contests ranged about the conscious steps toward socialization, conceivably culminating in a final open struggle between the two classes, but more probably shading into the Socialist commonwealth through transitional stages, no one of which requires a cataclysm for its inauguration.

CHAPTER IX

THE ULTIMATE ECONOMIC PROGRAM OF SOCIALISM

PART I. THE DETAILS OF EXPROPRIATION

IF we compare on the one hand the *Communist Manifesto* and the Socialist Party program of 1908 and on the other the American socialist writings of the last generation, such as Gronlund's *Coöperative Commonwealth* and Vail's *Modern Socialism*, we notice a striking difference of subject-matter.¹ While the latter expositions of Socialism consist almost wholly of arraignments of the present system and detailed plans for the ultimate Socialist state, both the *Manifesto* and the modern program, although emphasizing with equal vigor the defects of capitalism, yet make hardly an explicit reference to the coming commonwealth, and devote their main energies to three things, an historical analysis of capitalism, a call to the class struggle, and a list of immediate demands. Even less detailed than in the *Manifesto* is the allusion of the Socialist platform to the coming state:

“The wage-workers cannot be freed from exploitation without conquering the political power and substituting collective for private ownership of the land and means of production used for exploitation”;

¹ Vail, op. cit., p. 45, *seq.*; Gronlund, op. cit., p. III, *seq.*

while the Municipal Program of New York gives only a single phrase to "the ultimate object of overthrowing capitalism and establishing the coöperative commonwealth."¹

The platform of the Socialist Labor Party calls the workers to put an end to the class conflict

"by placing the land and all means of production, transportation, and distribution into the hands of the people as a collective body, and substituting the Coöperative Commonwealth for the present state of planless production, industrial war, social disorder—a commonwealth in which every worker shall have the free exercise and full benefit of his faculties, multiplied by all the modern factors of civilization."²

In the authoritative Socialist writings of the day we find an absence of emphasis upon the ultimate commonwealth hardly less surprising to the reader whose previous information in Socialism has been procured from *Looking Backward* or *News from Nowhere*.³ Spargo's *Socialism* takes up "The Outlines of the Socialist State" for the last thirty pages only, after two hundred pages of history and analysis; Hillquit gives the subject only forty pages inserted between one hundred of philosophy and two hundred of tactics and reforms; Simons makes his socialism incidental to essays in economic history; and Hunter and Thompson leave the ultimate program almost entirely to the imagination in their enthusiasm for practical political action.⁴

¹ National Platform, p. 4.

² P. 26.

³ *Looking Backward*, p. 65, *seq.*; *News*, etc., p. 113, *seq.*

⁴ Spargo, *op. cit.*; Hillquit, *Socialism in Theory and Practice*; Simons, *American Farmer, Class Struggles in America*; Hunter, *Socialists at Work*, Thompson, *op. cit.*

In this proportionate treatment the American Socialists are consistent with the principles of Marxism. The distinction between Utopian and scientific Socialism lies in the fact that the former submitted to the choice of mankind a plan founded upon ethics and expediency, while the latter present an analysis of economic forces, with a prognostication as to their more or less inevitable tendencies. The strictly economic interpretation of history precludes the determination of the details of a society until the material conditions which are to produce that society have arrived; the new institution must develop within the shell of the old.¹ The general prophecy of the socialization of capital by a victorious proletariat is deduced from the essential conditions of economic development, but the details of the consequent social order must depend largely upon the specific industrial relationships prevailing at the time of the revolution. Spargo speaks for the American Socialists in declaring that it would be absurd and contrary to Marxian principles to attempt to give detailed specifications of the coming state.²

While the immediate demand is a part of scientific Socialism in so far as it is an outgrowth of the economic forces of any given time, the ultimate demand is Utopian unless it is a direct consequence of inevitable economic development. Hence the ultimate program of scientific Socialism, from the *Communist Manifesto* to the present day, has contained only the general demand for

“the transfer of ownership in the social tools of production — the land, factories, machinery, rail-

¹ Marx, Critique of Political Economy, p. 12-13.

² Spargo, Socialism, p. 211.

roads, mines, etc. — from the individual capitalists to the people, to be operated for the benefit of all.”¹

In so far as Socialism has been dominated by the idea of automatic cataclysm, the political movement has felt the need of no further specifications. The revolution would inevitably arrive, and the triumphant working class would be guided in constructive details by contemporary economic conditions. As before noted, however, the element of conscious choice has, beginning with Marx himself, gradually come to modify the expectation of cataclysm.² While Socialism as a science could rest content with the broad prophecy of a social democracy, Socialism as a political movement has been compelled to win support by addressing men's desires.

The essence of Socialist propaganda, therefore, is appeal not to the scientific spirit, but to the principle of class or human interest. Irrespective of the inevitability of the Socialist commonwealth, will such a society be practicable and desirable? Around this question cluster all the popular attacks upon Socialism. Where scientific Socialists have refused to fill in the Marxian outline of their democracy, this task has been performed on the one hand by such popular opponents as Rae, Mallock, and Cathrein, and on the other by the Utopians and State Socialists.³ Accordingly, although Marx considered the details of the ultimate program a mere matter for speculation, and Liebknecht gave everyone leave to conceive the Socialist state as he pleased, the present-day So-

¹ Hillquit, *Theory and Practice*, p. 11; see also Simons, *Class Struggles*, p. 31, and Debs, *Socialist Campaign Book*, 1908, p. 5.

² *Critique of Political Economy*, p. 12.

³ Cathrein, *op. cit.* p. 260; Mallock, *op. cit.*, p. 60, *seq.*; Menger, *L'État Socialiste*, Bk. I., Chap. 11, Bk. II, Chap. 7.

cialists are realizing the need of some authorized ideal of the coming commonwealth to oppose to the unauthorized creations of their opponents.

These attempts at detailed description have found their way into the Socialist programs only, as a rule, negatively, in such cases as the repudiation of interference with religion, but they form an important part of propaganda, and as such are worthy of notice. They are scientific in so far as they are necessary deductions from essential economic tendencies and from the general definition of Socialism, Utopian in so far as they represent mere suggestions based upon utility or upon transitory economic forces.

Taking as a working definition of Socialism the prevention of exploitation by means of the democratic socialization of capital, we are confronted first by questions as to the extent and the process of socialization.

As to the first point, many writers have drawn false implications by using the accepted definition of capital as all wealth used in the production of other wealth, and thus crediting Socialism with the purpose of expropriating such individual tools as the needle and the wheelbarrow. The Socialist definition of capital, however, as wealth used in exploitation, restricts to an indefinite extent the objects of socialization, or expropriation.¹ The definition of Hillquit previously quoted, therefore, restricts expropriation to the social tools of production, specifying these to avoid misunderstanding.

For a time Socialism felt so strongly the impetus of the Marxian theories that it confidently expected the concentration predicted by him to go on until

¹ Untermann, *Marxian Economics*, p. 28.

every workshop and truck-farm should become a means of exploitation and thus an appropriate object for socialization. Cathrein therefore argues against Socialism as complete collectivization, and Hirsch quotes the Fabians as eventually aiming at all capital.¹

As has already been noticed, however, concentration has been checked in several quarters, the most notable being that of agriculture. The Socialists have been compelled to reckon with both the independent American farmer and the European peasant proprietor as persistent though constantly modified factors; and A. M. Simons, after a detailed study of the matter in *The American Farmer*, comes to the conclusion that the medium-sized farm is increasing in the United States at the expense of those abnormally large or small.²

The American Socialist leaders, accordingly, have for several years followed Kautsky in assuring the small farmer that he is not to be molested in the independent working and even ownership of his land.³ Simons has told the farmer in great detail that he is as much a member of the exploited class as is the industrial laborer, and that his interests lie wholly with those of the city proletariat in getting rid of the incubus of capitalist control.⁴ In Thompson's *Constructive Program of Socialism* we have an outline of the changes in German policy regarding the agricultural problem and the consequent effect on American thought.⁵

¹ Hirsch, p. 18; Cathrein, p. 245, *seq.*

² P. 101, *seq.*

³ Kautsky, *Social Revolution*, p. 159, Kerr edition.

⁴ Simons, *The American Farmer*, p. 137, *Socialism and the Farmers*, p. 63, *seq.*

⁵ *Op. cit.*, p. 63-66.

Notwithstanding the foregoing attitude among the leaders, the 1908 program of the Socialist Party included no specific agricultural reforms, devoting only a phrase to the present exploited condition of the small farmer, and embraced in its immediate demands the collective ownership of all land. Within a year, however, an amendment to the platform was passed by national referendum which marks a turning-point in American Socialism. By this amendment the words, "and all land," were struck out from the demands and the following inserted in the sections on General Principles: —

"There can be no absolute private title to land. All private titles, *whether called fee simple or otherwise*, are and must be subordinate to the public title. The Socialist Party strives to prevent land from being used for the purpose of exploitation and speculation. It demands the collective possession, control, or management of land *to whatever extent may be necessary to attain that end*. It is not opposed to the occupation *and possession of land* by those using it in a useful and bona fide manner without exploitation." ¹

Needless to say, the passing of this declaration has aroused great antagonism among those party members who cling to the interpretation of the class struggle as excluding the independent worker, and to the expectation of automatic concentration in all industry. The rival Socialist Labor Party, which still demands in its platform the public ownership of the land and all means of production, hailed with joy this proof of the "middle-class" character of the Socialist Party, and gave great publicity to the

¹ Referendum B., 1909 (italics mine).

secession of a ward branch in Denver on the ground of the party decision "to drop *Socialism* from its platform and adopt in its stead an emasculated form of the late lamented Single Tax." ¹

As has previously been brought out, agriculture is not the only field in which the Socialist expects the continuance of some private production. Marxians are agreed upon the needlessness of interference with the non-exploiting mechanic or tradesman, and the only dispute in the matter between the orthodox and the Revisionist is as to the prospect of the automatic disappearance of these small industries under the pressure of centralized competition, be the latter capitalist or socialist in nature. The divergence of present-day Socialism on this point from the complete collectivization of Bellamy is indicated by the fact that a party speaker stated recently to a large gathering of the rank and file his belief that in the coming commonwealth only 50 or 60% of the means of production would be socialized.

J. M. Work expresses very simply the prevailing attitude regarding the extent of expropriation:—

"I do not mean that Socialism will forbid any man owning and running any industry he pleases. Socialism will own and run industries itself. It will give the workers the full value of their product. It will sell the products at cost. Anyone else engaging in the same industries would, therefore, have to give the workers the full value of their product and sell the products at cost. But he couldn't make anything that way. Consequently he wouldn't do it. If the industry were of such a character that he

¹ S. L. P. platform, p. 26; The Daily People, Oct. 12, 1909.

could carry it on by his own labor alone he might do so. But he would not be exploiting anyone then.”¹

The process of expropriation is a matter upon which Socialists refrain from making definite statements, on the ground that it must depend upon the conditions of the social revolution in each country. If the proletariat should come into power as the result of a civil war, confiscation without compensation would be probable, and Socialists cite as a precedent the emancipation of the slaves by Abraham Lincoln.² As a violent revolution is not generally anticipated, however, the majority of Socialists, including Marx, have expected that some measure of compensation will be adopted as expedient for society.

“It is not less nor more than the truth,” says Spargo, “that all the leading Socialists of the world agree that compensation could be paid without doing violence to a single Socialist principle, and most of them favor it.”³

As to the form of compensation, the most radical schemes are adapted only to the period of complete Socialist triumph, and as such are confessedly tentative. Gronlund proposed that the capitalists be compensated merely with annuities terminable with their lives or those of their children, these annuities to allow a standard of living not far from that formerly enjoyed.⁴ Another suggestion, and one more suited to a time of transition, is the payment to the capitalist of bonds bearing a decreasing rate of inter-

¹ Work, op. cit., p. 50.

² Ibid., p. 82-84.

³ Socialism, Rev., p. 334; see also Hillquit, Socialism in Theory and Practice, p. 103.

⁴ Gronlund, Coöperative Commonwealth, p. 149.

est, with either a final repudiation of the principal or a payment of that also in instalments.

Certain plans, on the other hand, are proposed as immediate measures based upon present economic conditions. These comprise several modes of procedure: — first, to secure funds for government industry, incidentally decreasing the power of capital in private hands, by the enforcement of the present taxes against corporations and by the progressive taxation of incomes and inheritances; second, to regulate the granting of franchises so as to secure reversal to the state or municipality after a short period; and third, by means of the funds of taxation, supplemented by the issue of ordinary interest-bearing bonds, to organize new government industries and buy up such private concerns as the people deem expedient, beginning with the natural monopolies.¹ These suggestions have been almost wholly incorporated in the demands of the national and local platforms, as will be noted later.

The expectation is that the private energy set free in this manner will speedily be devoted to the formation of new trusts. As fast as these are ripe for socialization the government will in turn buy these up, and as, according to the Socialist creed, the individual industry can rarely compete with the socialized, the rate of profit will steadily fall as the rate of wages increases until the few remaining capitalists gladly relinquish their precarious industries at a low valuation and the coöperative commonwealth is supreme.²

To sum up the chapter: present-day American So-

¹ Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 28, *seq.*

² A. Besant, *Fabian Essays*, p. 158.

cialists follow the principles of Marxism in refraining in their official utterances from details as to their ultimate program. It is generally agreed, however, that the extent of socialization will be determined by the extent of capital in the Socialist sense, and that the process must depend upon the economic conditions prevailing at the time; while certain tentative plans of compensation are put forth in propaganda with a view to the ultimate Socialist state, other measures are proposed for immediate adoption under present conditions.

CHAPTER X

THE ULTIMATE ECONOMIC PROGRAM

PART II. PRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTION

THE essence of Marxism is the inevitable socialization of production and distribution developing from the capitalist system of industry; yet the form which this socialization is to take is a mooted question. The communist organization, usually taken for granted by the pre-Marxians, is by modern Socialists relegated to Utopia as a possible development in the distant future from a long-established Socialist state. The bureaucracy of the State Socialists, on the other hand, while acknowledged by certain Marxists as a possible intermediate condition between individualist capitalism and Socialism, is incompatible with the democratic management which is an essential of the Socialist society.

There are three present forms of industrial organization which Socialists believe may contain the germs of the future socialized production. These are the voluntary coöperative, the labor union, and the state-owned industry developed from the "trust."

Socialists consider the voluntary coöperative an integral part of the working-class movement. They believe the principles under which it operates to be harmonious with those of industrial development,

and expect this form of organization to be prominent in the future "coöperative commonwealth." It is generally acknowledged, however, that the coöperative has not yet been tried on a sufficient scale to serve as a type of Socialist production. The Belgian coöperative societies and the successors of the Rochdale Pioneers, to be sure, have achieved success as distributive organizations; even in the field of production the Brussels bakeries control 10% of the trade and the English Wholesale Coöperative can point to twenty-two kinds of goods manufactured with a yearly profit of over ninety-eight thousand pounds.¹ In spite of these facts, however, the fair-minded Socialist acknowledges that, while distributive coöperation is a success, productive coöperation has not won for itself a permanent place in industry. The English societies, successful as they may be, are not pure coöperatives in that they are undemocratic in system, and work for profits rather than mutual benefit; the Belgian bakeries constitute a special case, in that the baker's trade is one of the few in which production and distribution are regularly associated, and that the enterprise is supported by the great distributive society of the coöperatives.² Productive coöperation is an exception in our present social order.

"As a rule," says Hillquit, "productive societies attain a measure of business success only when conducted in conjunction with societies for consumption. As independent enterprises they fail."³

Those American Socialists who are influenced most strongly by the ideas of Syndicalism believe that

¹ Bliss, *Encyclopedia of Social Reform*, p. 295-297.

² *Coöperation*, p. 4.

³ *Socialism in Theory and Practice*, p. 252.

the industrial union is the germ from which shall grow the Socialist system of production. They claim that, containing as it does the skilled and unskilled workers of an entire industry, it is sufficient for every constructive purpose, and that the manual and mental workers so organized will be competent to meet the whole economic situation, unaided by the political state. To Sombart's criticism that a social organization growing out of the labor union could be based only upon the primitive tool system of production, the industrial union replies that the industrial differs from the craft union in the very fact that it is the outgrowth not of the tool system, but of the capitalist machine industry, and thus marks the next form of organized production.¹

Except for the extreme advocates of industrial unionism, however, Socialists look forward to a system of production and distribution based for the most part upon government ownership, its form to be a development from the "trust" of to-day, which, according to Marxian principles, will become the typical industrial organization during the last stages of capitalism. Yet none of the experiments hitherto made in this direction are counted by Marxians as true specimens of Socialist production. The United States Post Office is obliged to depend upon privately owned railroads, while the state-owned railroads of Germany owe their support to a bureaucratic militarism directly opposed to the Socialist ideal.

The essence of Socialism consists in the ownership and management of the industrial organization by the proletarian society, with a view to the prevention

¹ See Sombart, *op. cit.*, Revised, p. 100, *seq.*

of exploitation. Only such a democratic industrial organization, as yet non-existent, could ever be taken as a type of Socialist production, and only when this form of industry should become the dominant national type could the features most characteristic of Socialism be expected to develop. For the details of production and distribution under the future commonwealth, therefore, Socialist thinkers must resort chiefly to speculation or to deduction from the rough outline of Marx and Engels given in a previous chapter.

The Americans Hillquit and Simons join with Kautsky and Vandervelde in repudiating centralization as incompatible with democratic control, and in vigorously maintaining the principle of local autonomy, always with the reservation that organization must follow in the steps of automatic centralization.¹ Simons writes: —

“The size of the group owning each industry would depend upon the scale of production which was found to be economical. Probably such industries as city lighting, street-cars, waterworks, etc., would be owned in groups roughly approximating our present municipalities. . . . Other industries would more properly belong to a community the size of a modern state, or perhaps of a county or township. . . . If further economic development should show that there are fields of industry in which concentration is not economical and in which exploitation can be abolished and production furthered by the retention of private ownership in certain instruments of production, such

¹ Hillquit, *op. cit.*, p. 32; Vandervelde, *Collectivism*, p. 135; Kautsky, *Morrow of Social Revolution*, p. 166.

ownership is in no way at variance with the principles of the socialist philosophy.”¹

The legislative plan of the Social Democratic faction in the Wisconsin Legislature makes its first policy direct legislation and home rule for local units of government; and the Municipal Program of New York declares for local self-government for the city, against government by boards and commissions, for the initiative, referendum, and recall, and for the extension of the powers of the city so as to enable it to engage freely in industrial or public works.²

Spargo comes to the following conclusion with regard to the forms of production under Socialism:—

“The economic organization of the Socialist state would consist, then, of three distinct forms, as follows: 1. Private production and exchange, subject only to such general supervision and control by the state as the interests of society demand, such as protection against monopolization, sanitary laws, and the like; 2. voluntary coöperation, subject to similar supervision and control; 3. production and exchange by the state, the administration to be by the autonomous organizations of the workers in industrial groups, subject to the laws and government of society as a whole.”³

We have then, as the foundation of the Socialist industrial structure, a series of autonomous industrial groups, electing their own minor officers, but generally subject to the political government. Beyond this point the Marxists have refused to do more

¹ Am. Farmer, p. 69, 209.

² Gaylord in N. Y. Call, Jan. 16, 1910; N. Y. Mun. Prog.

³ Socialism, p. 227.

than speculate, although the Utopian Mackaye has presented a minute plan of organization in his Pantocracy.¹ The State Socialist Menger suggests that the municipality possess the power of appointing or discharging the managers of the labor group, and the Fabians expect that these "captains of industry" would rise through the various sub-groups until the group heads should form an industrial cabinet responsible only to the sovereign democracy.² These in turn may have relations with similar officers in other lands until a complete international coöperative structure is formed.³

As is natural, those Socialists who emphasize political action and those who place their reliance on the industrial union differ as to the point at which, if at all, the industrial groups should become subordinate to the political power, and thus as to the method of electing their officers, whether by vote of the political or the industrial constituency. Hillquit evidently considers the latter the typical position, as he writes: —

"The notion that the industrial affairs of the socialist state will not be administered by officers elected by general popular vote, but by men chosen by the members of each separate trade and calling for their experience and general qualifications is generally accepted by the Socialists."⁴

While American Socialists, then, are agreed that the productive organization of the future is to be a natural outgrowth of capitalist industry, that decentralization and local autonomy are essential to

¹ Economy of Happiness, p. 429, *seq.*

² Menger, quoted in Hillquit, *op. cit.*, p. 136.

³ A. Besant, quoted *ibid.*, p. 143.

⁴ *Ibid.*; p. 142.

democracy, and that further details may be classed as Utopian, there is a difference of opinion between the emphasizeers of political action on the one hand and industrial unionism on the other as to whether the labor union or the state-owned industry will furnish the dominant form of organization.

Since the Socialist society is to be a development from the capitalist regime, rather than a return to primitive economic conditions, the present rate of industrial progress must be expected, and the maintenance of this rate will depend upon the existence of adequate incentive to labor and its efficient assignment.

The two problems of incentive and assignment, with the closely related topic of remuneration, have supplied the chief material for the popular opponents of Socialism, and have illustrated the development of Socialist ideas as to equality of ability and of income. While there have always been antagonists to charge the Socialists with asserting the actual equality of all men, this assertion has usually been to the Socialist, as to the American, an attractive figure of speech. Both may inadvertently bring it forward in campaign oratory, but neither will hold to it in sober writing. It is difficult to find the claim of equality put forth by any Socialist author, while G. B. Shaw goes to the opposite extreme in his advocacy of eugenics and Enrico Ferri refuses even to admit the natural equality of the sexes.¹

"Socialism," according to Spargo, "instead of being defined as an attempt to make men equal, might perhaps be more accurately and justly defined

¹ Ferri, *op. cit.*, p. 20, note.

as a social system based upon the natural inequalities of mankind. Not human equality, but equality of opportunity to prevent the creation of artificial inequalities by privilege is the essence of Socialism."¹

Hillquit expresses himself similarly to the effect that the chief defect of our present social legislation is in the assumption of universal equality which tends in practice to sanction the power of the strong against the weak.²

Although the American Socialists thus repudiate the notion of absolute equality, they are, as a result of their belief in economic determinism, as vigorously opposed to the "great man theory," while they refuse to admit any present ratio between the incomes and the abilities of men, and lend a cordial ear to all evidence tending to minimize human inequality. Hillquit argues against Mallock's doctrine of ability on the Marxian ground that social forces, rather than the individual, are chiefly responsible for achievement, and Socialist lecturers and reviewers have greeted with enthusiasm the egalitarian arguments of Ward's *Applied Sociology*.³

Equality of income, like equality of nature, is a notion relegated by modern Socialists to their moments of millennial reverie. Marx, as has been said, contemplated two states of the future, one, with a mere approximation to equality, to follow the social revolution, and another, where communistic distribution should rule, to be developed from a long-continued Socialist society.⁴ Beyond this general ex-

¹ Socialism, p. 236.

² Socialism in Theory and Practice, p. 81.

³ Ward, op. cit., p. 239, *seq.*

⁴ Marx, On the Gotha Programme, p. 649 (Quoted by Skelton, op. cit., p. 202).

pectation of a tendency toward communism to arise in the remote future, Socialists are agreed in repudiating the claim for equality of income in the Socialist commonwealth.

“Just and feasible,” writes Hillquit, “as this ideal of distribution may be, it is to-day nevertheless a mere ideal, a hope to be realized in the more or less distant future. It is not a part of the present program of the socialist movement. Modern socialists recognize that the methods of distribution under the new order of things must take for their starting-point the present methods, i. e., payments of varying wages or salaries for services rendered.”¹

Since there is among American Socialists a free recognition of the inequality of individual powers, a repudiation of the claim of equality of income, and an insistence upon the development of Socialist conditions from those of the final stages of capitalism, there seems thus far to be no incompatibility between the contemplated Socialist state and the principle of competition in the field of labor. That there is a manifest hesitancy, however, to acknowledge the presence of this principle in the ultimate commonwealth, is suggested by an examination of current Socialist replies to inquiries as to incentive, assignment of work, and remuneration.

While as a Marxian the Socialist may and often does consistently refuse to offer a solution to these problems, as an advocate he finds himself obliged to oppose some positive ideal to the false creations of antagonists. The ideals most emphasized appear to be largely Utopian, as based upon conditions of in-

¹ Op. cit., p. 118

dustry and human nature that could be perfected only in the far-away period of communism.

The first incentive held out by the party Socialist of all shades of belief is usually that of pleasure in labor. A. M. Simons, after a careful analysis of the past in *Class Struggles in America*, dismisses the future with the rhapsody: —

“Marvelous mechanical creations, the fruits of America’s inventive genius, controlled and operated by a nation of skilled workers, can transform these natural resources into forms that will meet every want of mind or body at an expenditure of human energy so slight that it will no longer be avoided as distasteful toil, but will be looked upon as joyous play.”¹

J. M. Work speaks in glowing terms of the joy of effort and the ecstasy of achievement, and finishes his chapter on incentive with the vague sentence: —

“Meantime, Socialism will provide a varied multitude of lesser incentives, including the incentive to secure several times as large an income as the average man is getting now.”²

Even Spargo, in his propaganda book, *The Socialists*, although giving an emphatic denial of the claim for equal remuneration, seems to evade the question of material incentive by speaking of rewards “which men will strive after more earnestly than they could strive for gold.”³

An additional incentive to that of enjoyment in labor is that of interest in the joint product, implied

¹ P. 32.

³ P. 119.

² Op. cit., p. 42, 43.

by Debs, and by Work in the quotation given above.¹ The Socialist reasons that, since each worker will share in the product equally or proportionally, it is to his interest to make this product as large as possible, and so he will toil to his full capacity and see that his neighbor does the same. Theoretically, this would doubtless take place, but as Schaeffle has pointed out, if a million workers are to share the reward and the shirking of one laborer merely decreases the total by a millionth, the prospect of losing the millionth part of a millionth is not likely to prove an adequate spur to labor.

Thinking Socialists recognize this difficulty, and even those who elsewhere seem to place reliance upon the attractiveness of labor, frankly supplement the idealistic incentive, in their more comprehensive writings, with the economic one of shorter hours and higher pay. While such motives as ambition, patriotism, and disinterested love of art or science will, according to these Socialists, be operative far more than at present in all higher forms of work, there will be need of a material spur, at least in the earlier stages of Socialism, to call forth the efforts of the ordinary toiler.

Although Spargo, in the passage previously quoted, makes no definite mention of other than immaterial incentives, yet in his larger book, *Socialism*, he explains that under the coöperative commonwealth men could easily be led by higher remuneration to undertake less pleasant work than what they would otherwise choose.²

J. M. Work, too, while wholly idealistic in his "Incentive" chapter, yet declares elsewhere:—

¹ Debs, *The Issue*, p. 15.

² *Socialism*, p. 232.

“Devotees of capitalism who are so absurdly fearful lest Socialism should destroy incentive will please note that this method retains the incentive to gain a higher income or shorter hours.”¹

The problem of incentive is thus met directly with solutions that are largely Utopian. Only in the writings of the younger Socialists, by comparing the statements as to incentive with those elsewhere on the subject of equality, do we see a tendency to supplement the idealistic incentive, as at present, with that of competition for material rewards, subject to the modifications that would naturally arise from the new social order.

Closely bound up with the problem of incentive is that of the assignment of labor under Socialism. Even if we grant the existence of an efficient motive for labor in all men, the question as to differences in skill and ability still remains. If every man should be permitted to choose his own task under the Socialist regime, efficient adjustment would not thereby be assured, for taste does not always mean ability, and, aside from differences in capacity, we have the time-honored problem of the distasteful and dangerous work. Fourier's ingenious notion of making the children the scavengers because of their predilection for dirt would hardly tally with modern pedagogics, and if we trusted to disinterested patriotism it might well be that the hero best fitted to rule the industrial councils would immolate himself in a coal-mine, and vice versa.

Scientific socialism is here silent: there is nothing in the inevitable tendency of industrial development

¹ Op. cit., p. 106.

that points to any Socialist method of assigning labor other than the present method of competition. Here, as elsewhere, however, there is apparent among present-day Socialists an acknowledgment of the necessity of a degree of competition, with a clinging as far as possible to the old Utopian arguments. Spargo suggests that the men of science might safely be entrusted with the dirty work because of their ability to minimize it by inventions, and Work humorously volunteers to do it himself because of the short hours attached to it and the consequent opportunity for scholastic leisure; it is almost reluctantly that each one finally reminds us of the practical expedient of raising the remuneration for unpleasant or dangerous occupations.¹

Neither of these authors makes the additional obvious suggestion that the work that is both unskilled and unpleasant be left to those who are unfit for other tasks, and, in the same way, though both have admitted competition and inequality in general, neither attempts to solve the problem of ability by referring to these two possibilities. Spargo appears to leave the matter to individual choice, confident that most men prefer to do the things for which they are best fitted, and Work merely *implies* a competitive assignment of ability when he says: —

“The man who has a genius for managing industries will be sure of a good job in the Socialist commonwealth.”²

The hesitation of American writers in admitting the need of external tests for the assignment of

¹ Spargo, *Socialism*, Rev., p. 311; *Work*, op. cit., p. 74.

² Spargo, *Socialism*, Rev., p. 312; *Work*, op. cit., p. 69.

labor, and in applying the acknowledged principle of competition to the other acknowledged principle of inequality of ability and of income, reflects that of Kautsky's *Social Revolution*. While the German author freely applies the competitive principle to the quantitative problem of labor adjustment by reducing wages in congested trades and raising them in those needing laborers, he makes no definite suggestion as to competition in the qualitative adjustment of tasks to varying abilities.¹

Among the "ultra-proletarians," on the other hand, there is a tendency to take the position of Bebel, who counsels that all men and women be required to perform daily a certain amount of "productive" work, implying that only manual labor at some form of industry or agriculture be so termed.² The suggestion is a deduction from the hypothesis of a proletarian conquest of society, but its Utopian character is evident in its departure from the Marxian definition of labor as both mental and manual exertion, and in its running counter to the economic tendency of specialization.³

The point of view here indicated is probably due less to the proletarian theories of Marx than to the apotheosis of the manual laborer as such which occasionally appears in the modern movement. A recent controversy illustrates the connection of the foregoing speculations as to assignment of labor with the "proletarian-intellectual" discussion in the Socialist Party. The *New York Call* made the following editorial comment:—

¹ Soc. Rev., p. 134 (Kerr Ed.)

² Bebel, *Woman under Socialism*, p. 275, 290.

³ Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I. p. 7, 111 (Humboldt Ed.).

"In a Socialist state of society every one would have to do part of the work required in the social productive process; . . . therefore, no one would have to do manual labor for more than a few hours a day; . . . everybody would consequently be free to develop his physical and intellectual faculties; and . . . therefore, there will, under Socialism, be no intellectuals and no manual laborers." ¹

The reply of W. J. Ghent included the following:—

"No one, it seems to me, who bases his picture of Socialism on observed facts and tendencies in present-day life, rather than on Utopian dreams, can doubt that Socialism will bring about a greater and more widely prevalent specialization of function than we know to-day. . . . No normal man unobsessed by an ultra-proletarian view of life, can picture an efficient and civilized state in which thousands and thousands of men are not set apart to do intellectual work."

The editor reiterated his original point of view, however, with the addition that

"These mere 'intellectuals,' who are not Darwins and Marxes, will have to do their share of social productive labor, even if Socialist society will have to do without some of their brilliant—or other—efforts." ²

Among present-day Marxians, accordingly, we find either a refusal to consider the problem of assignment of labor, a somewhat hesitating acknowledgment of competition, or an implication of com-

¹ N. Y. Call, Nov. 30, 1909.

² Ibid., Dec. 4, 1909.

pulsory rotation in tasks, traceable rather to respect for the manual worker than to the deductions of Marxian theory.

A contrast to the indefiniteness of Marxism in this matter is found in the writings of the non-party American Socialist, Gronlund, and of the English Fabians.¹ These authors expect to see under the socialist regime a subdivision of labor as at present, with separate persons in general performing manual and professional work. Tasks are to be assigned by the industrial authorities upon the principle of competition, as in the present civil service, but a fair minimum wage is to be guaranteed to every worker and irksomeness is to be equalized as far as possible. If to this method is added the election of the higher officers of production by the members of the industrial group, the Fabian believes that the State departments may hope for efficiency at least equal to that of the trust of to-day.²

It is significant that, while the American Marxians acknowledge the impossibility of forecasting with accuracy the solution of the problems of incentive and assignment, they yet, when confronted with these problems, bring forward plans that must be designated as Utopian. It is by the non-Marxian Socialists, on the other hand, that we have clearly formulated a system, tentative, to be sure, but more nearly scientific, in that it continues to base the industrial fabric upon competition in the field of labor, until it can be shown that this force, like that of capitalist competition, is according to Socialist principles destined to disappear.

¹ Gronlund, *New Econ.*, p. 48; Shaw, *Fabian Essays*, p. 182.

² Shaw, *Fabian Essays*, p. 182.

The extreme democratic ideal in the American movement is doubtless largely responsible for the lapses into Utopianism which run through the ultimate economic program. The Socialist leader, who is usually an "intellectual" or a skilled worker, hesitates to claim for those like himself positions of reward and power denied to his comrades, the manual laborers. Accordingly, he is inclined either to pass lightly over the subject of differences in ability in assignment of tasks, or boldly to disregard these differences by requiring manual labor from all.

Although just distribution is the aim of Socialism, we have in regard to its details, as in those of production, the same silence on the part of the older Marxists, the same elaborate specifications by the Utopians, the same misunderstanding by non-socialists, and here, too, the beginning of definite outlines by the younger thinkers.

Though the expectation of dividing-up has existed only in the minds of ill-informed opponents, the Socialists of the middle 19th century usually took for granted a pure communism with the motto, — "From every man according to his powers, to every man according to his wants," Fourier being an exception with his elaborate distributive system allowing for interest and rent of ability.¹ Present-day Socialists, on the contrary, consign distribution according to needs, as they consign equality of distribution, to the far-off communism that may perhaps develop out of the successful coöperative commonwealth.²

The right to the whole produce of labor is often taken to be the Marxian theory of distribution, and

¹ Kirkup, *op. cit.*, p. 9.

² Hillquit, *op. cit.*, p. 117; Spargo, *Socialism*, p. 233.

as such is made by Menger the essence of Socialism.¹ Marx claimed no abstract rights, however, and, though the possession of the whole product by the *class* of laborers must be a necessary incident of the seizure of industry by the proletariat, the modern Socialist makes no such claim for the individual. On the contrary, it is frequently contended that under the developed industrial system the contribution of the individual is untraceable in the social product.

Upon the foundation of Marx's theory of value as the crystallization of labor time, a distinctly Socialist scheme of distribution was at one time proposed. Marx himself gave a mere suggestion of the plan, which Rodbertus elaborated into the system of labor-checks.² Since the value of a commodity is exactly measured by the socially necessary or average number of labor-hours embodied in it, the logical payment to the workman is a certificate or check stating that he has worked a certain number of hours, and exchangeable for any commodity embodying the specified amount of labor-time. This method, as worked out by Rodbertus, must be modified by the circumstance that the final cost of an article is made up of various labor-costs, — that of raw material, machinery, etc., — that skilled labor would count as a multiple of unskilled, and that several subtractions must be made from the value of each check to allow for the maintenance of the state, of communistic property, of capital and reserve funds, and of the incapacitated members of society. Thus a workman who labored for five hours might receive a check exchangeable for only four hours' embodied labor,

¹ Right to the Whole Produce of Labor, p. 7.

² On the Gotha Programme, p. 648 (Quoted by Skelton, op. cit., p. 206, note).

but, if a skilled artisan or professional man, for eight or nine. On the other hand, the subtraction might be made by setting a high valuation in labor-hours upon the article to be purchased.¹

Consistently Marxian as the labor check system may appear, it labors under the error of ascribing permanency and ethical force to what Marx formulated merely as a law of economic process during the transitory capitalist regime. For this reason and because of its obvious impracticability, the modern Socialist has already dropped it from his ultimate plan. Spargo speaks of the labor notes and the abolition of coined money as "early Utopian" plans, and Hillquit characterizes the scheme as

"on a par with that of the 'equitable labor exchange banks,' the communistic societies and the other social experiments of the utopian socialists."²

In popular pamphlets we may still see allusions to gold money as the "yellow relic of barbarism," and to the certificate of value equal to the product of the worker, but the creators of Socialist thought in Europe and America have definitely repudiated them.³

Having passed permanently out of the advocacy of equality, distribution according to needs, and compensation by labor time, the Socialists are left without a peculiar plan of distribution, and the vanguard, as already indicated, have begun to admit that the competitive system of wages and values must exist in the new commonwealth until the remote period when

¹ See Schaeffle, *Impossibility of Social Democracy*, p. 53, *seq.*

² Spargo, *Socialism*, p. 234; Hillquit, *op. cit.*, p. 118.

³ Richardson, *Introduction to Socialism*, p. 22; Debs, *The Issue*, p. 5.

communism may arise. Spargo and Hillquit, accordingly, accept without reserve Kautsky's belief that unequal money wages will be the Socialist method of remuneration for labor.¹

J. M. Work sums up the present Socialist position as follows: —

“The universal introduction of labor-saving machinery and the consequent division of labor, have made the production of men so nearly equal that the difference in incomes will not be large. But, in so far as there is a difference, it can be accurately ascertained by permitting free play to the law of supply and demand. The compensation in any given occupation can be raised, or, what amounts to the same thing, the hours can be shortened, until exactly the right number of men are attracted to that occupation. . . . Add to this the fact that the workers in any industry can dock anyone who shirks, and you have an accurate method of giving each worker the actual value of his work, without any slavish figuring and calculating.”²

It must be borne in mind that this admission of economic competition in the Socialist state is of recent date, even among the progressive writers, and, as was before mentioned, is seldom applied to the problems of incentive or qualitative assignment. The earliest unreserved avowal to this effect that I have seen is in an article by Raphael Buck, *The Remuneration of Labor in the Coöperative Commonwealth*, published in *The International Socialist Review* for July, 1903.

¹ Kautsky, *Social Revolution*, p. 134; Spargo, *Socialism*, p. 235; Hillquit, *op. cit.*, p. 118-119.

² *Op. cit.*, p. 106.

An indication of the Utopianism prevailing even at that time among Socialist writers is given in the comment upon the article by A. M. Simons, then the editor of the review: —

“ At the same time it is our opinion that the problem which he postulates is really unimportant and that the solution which he offers is by no means a probable one. . . . The incentive to labor under socialism must be found, not in some external force which will drive the laborer to his work, but in the inherent attractiveness of the work itself. The social energies will necessarily be concentrated on the problem of removing the disagreeable features from toil. Anyone who knows something of the spirit of craftsmanship as it has already existed at different times on the face of the earth, and who is in any degree familiar with modern psychology, will at once admit that the problem is really so slight as to be insignificant.” ¹

The determination of commodity values furnishes a companion problem to the method of remuneration, and enters with it into the adjustment of real wages. Under a regime of unequal salaries and labor-periods, it is not hard to conceive of a competitive wage scale more or less automatic, subject to the will of the people concerning maximum and minimum. With regard to commodity prices, however, there could be little real Socialist competition, for, even granting decentralization, the coöperative state can only escape the present “ planlessness ” by so directing industry as to avoid sectional rivalry for markets.

¹ I. S. R., July, 1903.

We have already reached a point in industry where a large proportion of our staple values tend to be adjusted, in part at least, by the monopoly rather than the competitive principle; and we are fast entering another stage where certain of these, such as gas, railroad rates, and protected products, are no longer left to be settled by the monopoly principle, — the point of maximum profit, — but by the arbitrary standard of what the government will permit. In any event, the Socialist state would indefinitely extend this category, and, aside from the utility of such a development, it is of importance to know whether an automatic law of value would still be operative, or whether the state would be compelled arbitrarily to fix all values. Work mentions the problem of value, to say that these state-fixed values tend to be adjusted automatically on the labor-time principle, and it is probable that in this opinion he is representative of the orthodox Marxian.¹

The subject of production and distribution in the ultimate program has been but inconsistently dealt with by American Socialists. The organization, indeed, has been partly determined, as a deduction from the proletarian character of the commonwealth, to consist of autonomous industrial groups, as decentralized as the course of economic development will allow. The relation of these groups to the political state will depend upon whether the future course of the Socialist movement is to be mainly industrial or political. Regarding the problems of incentive, assignment, and remuneration, the Marxians have declined to set forth any doctrines as authoritative, on the ground that solutions must arise

¹ J. M. Work, *op. cit.*, p. 112.

from the natural course of economic development. On the other hand, the misstatements of popular anti-socialists have evoked in Marxian propaganda tentative solutions of these problems, which are often Utopian in character, owing in part to the exaltation of unskilled labor in the modern Socialist parties. Among the Fabians and younger Marxians, however, there is the beginning of more scientific work in the basing of the Socialist industrial system upon the already existing principle of competition among labor of different grades. While the party programs include no definite proposals as to the future commonwealth, and while scientific socialism sanctions no prognostications except those based upon manifest economic tendencies, the Socialist propaganda is demanding a positive outline to oppose to the "Socialist specter" set up by its opponents; and it is upon the elaboration of an ultimate program free from Utopian vagaries and, although tentative, yet in harmony with economic development, that the future of Socialism as a voluntary movement will largely depend.

CHAPTER XI

THE ULTIMATE POLITICAL AND SOCIAL PROGRAM OF SOCIALISM

WHILE the expropriation of the capitalist by society is a distinctive feature of Socialism, yet the fact that this society is to consist of the triumphant proletariat is by Marxians considered equally essential. The State Socialists who, concentrating attention upon the collectivization of industry, expect, like Lassalle, that the transformation will come about by the aid of the present political state, are counted as enemies by the Socialist parties of the world; and the Socialists of America give but grudging approval to any instalment of socialization that is introduced by the government as now existing.¹

The attitude of Socialists toward the state is so frequently misunderstood that we find them popularly classed sometimes with anarchists and sometimes with bureaucrats. It is true that Socialism aims definitely at the enlargement of government functions, opposes anarchism with vigor, and works through the channels of legitimate politics.

"The history of the Socialist movement," says Spargo, "is in large part the history of a struggle with Anarchism. The result is seen to-day in the

¹ See Bernstein, Ferd. Lassalle, p. 185.

fact that wherever Socialism is strong, as in Germany, for example, Anarchism is a negligible force, and wherever, as in Spain, Socialism is weak, Anarchism prevails.”¹

To the extreme Socialist, however, since the state is an institution growing out of economic conditions and destined to change with them, the present state is only the summit of the capitalist hierarchy, the sponsor of bourgeois property rights. In Socialist writings, from Marx to Debs, we find references to the state as the instrument of the subjection of the working class.² Not only in theory but in concrete instances does the Socialist assume a critical attitude toward the present government. Discrimination on the part of the courts, recourse to the police in industrial disputes, and connivance of the state with capitalist interests, are so frequently brought forward as evidence of the bourgeois character of our government that they form the staple subject matter of the Socialist press. In the exposure and denunciation of political corruption American Socialists play an active part; but they ridicule the civic reformer who believes that he can stamp out this evil in existing society.³ The bourgeois state, reason the Socialists, is hopeless, as founded upon exploitation, and neither the punishment of grafters nor the election of good men to office can avail, unless we first destroy the cause of the corruption, the capitalist system.

“What is it that causes a legislator to take a bribe?” asks Mr. Work. “The private business interests of those who bribe him. . . . Graft is a

¹ The Socialists, p. 125.

² Debs, Unionism and Socialism, p. 3.

³ N. Y. Call, April 13.

product of the present environment. Socialism will provide an environment in which graft cannot live.”¹

Since the tendency of the proletarian Socialist is to view the capitalist state as the instrument of the oppressing classes, he transfers to a large extent the loyalty formerly existing as patriotism to the new ideal of working-class solidarity as shown in the international movement. The American parties are integral parts of international Socialism, being sharply divided from the Nationalist agitation of Bellamy some years ago. Believing that wars are mere devices of the bourgeoisie for the control of foreign markets and that the two opposing classes of capitalist and proletariat are superior to boundaries of land and race, they repeat very literally the cry of the *Communist Manifesto*, — “Workingmen of all countries, unite!”² The patriotic appeals so characteristic of the older parties are seldom heard among the Socialists, and an audience ready to break into enthusiasm at a reference to internationalism or the solidarity of labor will remain indifferent through the rhetorical allusions to home and country of the old-fashioned campaign orator.

To quote the National Platform, — “In the struggle for freedom the interests of all modern workers are identical. The struggle is not only national, but international. It embraces the world and will be carried to ultimate victory by the united workers of the world.”³

As internationalists, the American Socialists are distinctly opposed to war, ascribing this opposition, to be sure, more often to motives of enlightened class-interest than to those of humanitarian ethics. On

¹ Op. cit., p. 60-65.

² P. 46.

³ P. 4.

the other hand, they are by no means advocates of non-resistance; and, in so far as the issue has been definitely met, they appear to expect the substitution of popular militia for the standing army.¹ The attitude of American Socialists is that of the international movement in their advocacy of world federation, and in their hostility to all wars of expansion, to the increase of armaments and to the policy of imperialism.²

To Marx and Engels, exiled from the Fatherland in the popular cause, world-solidarity might well express the belief that "the workingmen have no country." To the present-day American Socialist the international ideal is frequently, it is true, coupled with a fierce criticism of national injustice to the proletarian; but more often it is hailed, as by Hunter and Thompson, as the fulfilment of the hope of the early Christians, or, as by Spargo and Work, as the culmination of true patriotism.³

"The red flag signifies," in the words of the latter, "that all men are brothers. . . . It is the international banner of the working-class. It has been the banner of the working-class for thousands of years. In the struggle for liberty, myriads of heroic workingmen have fought and died beneath its folds. Is it any wonder we love it? Old Glory is a national banner. I do not know of any valid reason why a Socialist should not appreciate those who fought the battles of their generations, the battles which had to be fought in the evolution of the race toward Social-

¹ See Speech of Victor Berger, N. Y. Call, April 12, 1910.

² Kautsky, N. Y. Call, May 16, 1910.

³ Hunter, Soc. at Work, p. 295; Thompson, op. cit., p. 80; Spargo, The Socialists, Appendix, p. 144.

ism. For my part, I do appreciate them, and I love the banner they fought under, the stars and stripes. Capitalism is trailing the flag in the dust. Socialism will rescue it.”¹

To the early Marxians the bourgeois government, as represented by the German militarism, was the typical state, and, as existing only for purposes of oppression, could, after the social revolution, have no excuse for being. This point of view is expressed in the oft-quoted passage from Engels, in which he explains that, as soon as the class struggle and the capitalist anarchy of production are abolished, there will be nothing more to repress; the government of persons will be succeeded by the administration of things, and the last independent act of the state will be the first in which it appears as representing the whole of society, the seizure of the instruments of production in the name of the people.²

Such a narrow conception of the state, however, forms no essential part of modern Socialist doctrine in either Europe or America. As early as 1875 Liebknecht did not hesitate to use freely the expression “the socialistic state,” and defines social democracy as “the just, wise, dignifying arrangement of state and society.”³

Hillquit analyzes the conception of the state indicated by such passages as that of Engels, and, after comparing it with various accepted definitions, concludes that in substance the Socialist definition of the state as an instrument of exploitation by the ruling classes is correct.

¹ Op. cit., p. 133.

² Socialism, Utopian and Scientific, p. 76-77.

³ Liebknecht, Socialism, etc., p. 4, 16.

He goes on to explain, however, that the ruling classes are subject to change, and that the center of power is now gradually shifting from the capitalists to the people at large, with the result that the state is becoming an instrument less of exploitation than of possible social and economic reform. When the social revolution is completed, the state will represent society as a whole rather than any particular class, and will still exist, though adapted to entirely new uses.¹

“The socialist society as conceived by modern Socialists differs, of course, very radically from the modern state in form and substance. It is not a class state, it does not serve any part of the population and does not rule any other part of the population; it represents the interests of the entire community, and it is for the benefit of the entire community that it levies taxes and makes and enforces laws. It is not the slaveholding state, nor the feudal state, nor the state of the bourgeoisie, — it is a socialist state, — but a state nevertheless, and since little or nothing can be gained by inventing a new term, we shall hereafter designate the proposed organized society as the Socialist State.”²

A similar view of the adaptation of government to serve a Socialist society is expressed in the Principles of the Socialist Labor Party,³ and in the Platform of the Socialist Party.⁴

The revolutionists of the Socialist Party, on the other hand, still cling literally to the conception of

¹ Cf. Liebknecht, *Socialism*, etc., p. 8.

² Hillquit, *op. cit.*, p. 100.

³ Principles, p. 3.

⁴ S. P. Platform, p. 5.

the state as held by Engels and denounce as unscientific the term "Socialist State."¹ Emphasizing as they do the industrial rather than the political character of the proletarian movement, they oppose as tinged with State Socialism all immediate demands of an economic nature, maintaining that, under the present state, the workers can gain economic advantages only by industrial weapons, and that they should therefore devote their political energies solely to such measures as will bring the state to an end under the control of the proletariat.

"Let us examine," says Liebknecht, "the state and society as they are. All power and means of life are to be found in the hands of a small minority, and this minority naturally use their power to secure and maintain that monopoly of all advantages which domination in state and society gives, and to prevent the subject majority obtaining political and social rights. . . . It follows therefrom that the interests of the subject people demand the transformation of the state from its foundation, according to their interest. It must cease to be the possession of a few persons of position and class and must become the possession of citizens with full and equal rights, of whom no one rules over the other, and none will be ruled by another."²

The achievement of a pure political democracy is accordingly the aim of the Socialist parties as distinguished from the State Socialists, and is, moreover, the point upon which American Socialists of all shades agree both as to ultimate and immediate program. While the Socialists are not alone in agit-

¹ N. Y. Call, April 12, 1910

² Liebknecht, Socialism, p. 7-8.

ing for such measures as tend toward a pure democracy, they bring to this advocacy an intensity which marks not so much the reformer as the revolutionist.¹ The detailed steps of the political reconstruction are outlined in the following chapter as a part of the immediate program of Socialism. They comprise in America, as everywhere, unrestricted and equal suffrage for men and women, the initiative and referendum, proportional representation, the right of recall, and the abolition of the upper parliamentary house. In view of the special conditions prevailing in this country it is advocated also that the power of the Supreme Court to pass upon legislation be abolished, that the Constitution be made amendable by majority vote, that all judges be elected for short terms, and that the power to issue injunctions be curbed.

It is realized by thinking Socialists, on the other hand, that all that democracy can do is to give the people power over their own affairs, and that a venal or careless nation under Socialism, as under capitalism, cannot hope for freedom.

"There is no such thing," writes Spargo in the revised edition of *Socialism*, "as an automatic democracy, . . . eternal vigilance will be the price of liberty under Socialism as it has ever been. There can be no other safeguard against the usurpation of power than the popular will and conscience ever alert upon the watch tower."²

The political democracy must rest permanently upon the social democracy; and Socialists base their ideal of the latter upon the principle of personal freedom. Spargo expects social authority to be

¹ Spargo, *Socialism*, etc., p. 215.

² *Ibid.*, Rev., p. 290.

reduced to the minimum necessary to preserve this freedom to all individuals; and Socialists often express the hope that after a few generations the whole body of criminal laws may be repealed, leaving the state nothing to do but to regulate industry.¹

In contrast to the bourgeois state, which is obliged to base its control upon the coercion of the individual, the Socialist democracy is expected to reach its full development only by the free interaction of unfettered judgments. Among the personal rights which must accordingly be kept inviolate, according to the Socialists, most important are those relating to speech, opinion on religious matters, assemblage, and the press. American Socialists are always loud in their demands for individual liberty in these respects, joining forces in protests and passive resistance with the industrial unionists in Spokane, the anti-clericals in Spain, and the revolutionists in Mexico.²

Since freedom in religious belief is a personal right which the Socialists maintain as essential to democracy, the notion that Socialism is an enemy to religion appears at first glance absurd. The popular anti-Socialist articles, however, notably Theodore Roosevelt's series in *The Outlook* of 1909, base their attack largely upon the charge of hostility to the institutions of religion and the family, and it is therefore important that this charge be fully analyzed.

As has been seen, the economic interpretation of history dominates the Socialist philosophy, and no institution is therefore held permanently sacred; religion, the state, and the present form of the family

¹ Socialism, Rev., p. 290; Work, op. cit., p. 107.

² Call, Nov. 28, 1909; Call, Jan. 16, 1910; Mother Jones, Call, April 13, 1910.

are outgrowths of the bourgeois system, and as such are as subject to change as were the corresponding institutions at the close of the classical period.¹ In its external forms, at any rate, religion is allowed by the Socialist no exemption from criticism. The state churches of Europe, in fact, being openly allied with the bourgeois governments, are to be counted among the enemies of the proletariat.

Furthermore, in the so-called "conflict between science and religion" in the nineteenth century, Socialists have played their part, the early Marxians, like most of the first generation of evolutionists, being aggressive agnostics, or even atheists.

There have been many modifications in religious thought, however, since the days of Darwin, and it is no longer necessary to choose between science and the church, or between radicalism and religion. A large section of American Socialists, comprising chiefly the educated among the native elements, are coming into more and more friendly terms with the more liberal of the churches, while the Christian Socialists, until recently unconnected with the political movement, are now committed to the Socialist Party without reserve.² These claim that only in Socialism can the teachings of pure Christianity be realized, and are doing much to win over politically those whose ethical principles are already opposed to the competitive system.

It was in view of the various misunderstandings regarding the attitude of the Socialists toward religion and the church that the Socialist Party inserted in their platform of 1908 the following statement:—

¹ La Monte, *op. cit.*, p. 98.

² The Christian Socialist, June 15, 1907.

“The Socialist Party is primarily an economic and political movement. It is not concerned with matters of religious belief.”¹

While the spokesmen of Socialism in America affirm with one accord this declaration of neutrality toward religion, certain of these, including A. M. Lewis and George Allan England, follow Bebel and Ferri in basing their neutrality upon the confidence that religious beliefs are destined to perish with the extension of scientific education. Spargo, however, represents the opinion of most American Socialists when he tells us that all grades of believers or unbelievers may accept the Socialist theories without doing violence to their own ideas.²

There is growing in the Socialist Party, as in other circles, a disposition to distinguish religion from its external and established forms, and to let each stand on its own merits as a social force to be judged by its fruits in human welfare.

“If the church is an organ of class rule,” writes A. M. Simons, “and is dependent upon class distinctions for its existence, then it will be injured. If it is based upon a system of ethical practice and doctrines then I can see no reason why it should be injured, — providing those doctrines stand the test of reason.”

Among the foreign-born Socialists from countries dominated by a state church, and among the working-class rank and file of the American membership, there is still considerable hostility to the church and a strong tendency to atheism. This state of affairs is

¹ P. 4.

² The Socialists, p. 128.

doubtless owing in part to a neglect of the working-class by the Protestant churches. It must be remembered also that liberality usually requires wide culture for a basis, and that the self-educated worker whose creed has come into collision with the materialistic conception of Marx is less likely to make a synthesis of both than to substitute the dogmas of scientific socialism for those of revelation.

An indication that this belligerent irreligion is due less to antagonism to Christianity than to rebellion against authorized theology is shown in the reverence paid by most Socialists to the historical Jesus, viewed often as a fellow-revolutionist condemned by the respectability of his day.

Says an avowed materialist, Ernest Untermann:—

“Jesus had transformed the Jewish god of hate into a god of love and a prince of peace. The church of the possessing Christians molded him into a hideous monstrosity, a god of love who is a god of hate, and a prince of peace who brings a sword. And they lived up to this monstrosity of their own creation and flew at one another’s throats immediately after they had betrayed their proletarian comrades and destroyed the life’s work of Jesus.

“But the modern proletarian remembers the cross on Golgotha.”¹

The family, like the church, is frequently charged with being an object of Socialist attack, and in this case also we have the reiteration of neutrality by the Socialists themselves. The foundation for the charge exists chiefly in the before mentioned attitude of Marxians toward present institutions, and in their

¹ Science and Rev., p. 33, *seq.*

insistence upon the equal rights of women as an essential of social democracy.

"The Socialist philosophy," says A. H. Floaten, of the National Executive Committee for 1909, "has no attitude toward the institution of the family, except that this institution like all other forms of institutions has changed and will change according to the changes of conditions and environment." Arthur Morrow Lewis makes the statement that any fundamental change in economic relations cannot fail to affect the family, among other social institutions, and La Monte believes that the family of the future, while probably monogamous, will not be compelled to assume this form.¹

As we have it at present, according to the Socialists, the family rests upon a foundation of property rights, veiled under some of the outworn forms of the patriarchate. With the minimizing of inherited estates and the economic independence of women, with full civil and political rights accorded to the latter and the eventual responsibility of society for the maintenance of children, both the theory of the patriarchal and the actuality of the property family would disappear. Women would be compelled neither to marry for a home nor to remain in subjection to a distasteful marriage; and, though few Americans look for the revolution foretold in Bebel's *Woman under Socialism*, yet a decided change in the position of the sex would under these circumstances be inevitable.²

Furthermore, Socialists are given to pointing out certain evils in the present institution of the family: — that strict monogamy is not universal; that many

¹ La Monte, op. cit., p. 99

² Op. cit., p. 343, *seq.*

women are kept in immorality directly or indirectly for economic reasons; and that divorce, itself less an evil than a danger signal, is alarmingly prevalent in America. They are not alone in observing these wrongs, but, as their philosophy absolves them from reverence for institutions as such, they are found in large numbers among those who cry out for a frank discussion and correction of the abuses of the family.

The emphasis of Socialists upon personal liberty causes at times even a real hostility to marriage in its legal aspects.

“Other Socialists,” writes Spargo, “would include in the category of private acts outside the sphere of law the union of the sexes. They would do away with legal intervention in marriage and make it exclusively a private concern. On the other hand, again, many Socialists, probably an overwhelming majority, would object. They would insist that the state must, in the interest of the children and for its own self-preservation, assume certain responsibilities for, and exercise a certain control over all marriages. While believing that under Socialism marriage would no longer be subject to economic motives — matrimonial markets for titles and fortunes no longer existing — and that the maximum of personal freedom together with the minimum of social authority would be possible in the union of the sexes, they would still insist upon the necessity of that minimum of legal control.”¹

The *Communist Manifesto*, followed by many other Socialist utterances, has incurred the suspicion of moralists by accusing in unmeasured terms the

¹ Spargo, *Socialism*, p. 218-219.

"bourgeois" family and offering no substitute in its place. A few writers, notably Bebel and Bax, with a negligible and indefinite following in this country, anticipate frankly a new type of family, ranging from trial marriage to a relation more or less approaching free love.¹ It is the unofficial writings of these radicals, together with the generally critical attitude of Socialists toward the abuses of the family, that have supplied material for the charges before mentioned.

While the Socialist Party remains officially neutral as to the form of the family, there is an abundance of statements by such various leaders as Spargo, Hillquit, Work, Simons, Berger, Goebel, and De Leon, maintaining that Socialism will make the permanently monogamic relation possible for the first time in history.²

Victor Berger is typical in his declaration:—

"The story that Socialism will destroy the family is one of the lies brought up against every reform movement. . . . It is *capitalism* which destroys the family by compelling the fathers and the mothers to go to the factory, and by forcing young children into the workshop. Socialism will restore the family; and by making the *women economically independent*, it will also bring about the much needed physical and moral *regeneration of our civilized nations*."

Popular education must, in the last resort, be the reliance of either a Socialist or a capitalist democracy. While the public schools are indeed bringing definite results in the eradication of illiteracy, an indication

¹ Bebel, *op. cit.*, p. 345-347; Bax, *Religion of Socialism*, p. 145; *Outlooks from the New Standpoint*, p. 15, *seq.*

² See De Leon, preface of Bebel's *Woman under Socialism*, p. vi.

of the work still untouched is afforded by the fact that economics, a requisite for all in a Socialist state, is at present taught in but two of the high schools of Manhattan.

The Socialist parties, with their motto, "Agitate, educate, organize," claim to be themselves an important factor in the education of the proletariat toward an efficient democracy. Organized upon purely democratic lines, with the constant use of the referendum, they are helping the labor unions to train the workers, both native and foreign-born, in a knowledge of economic tendencies, a capacity for reasoned judgment, and a familiarity with the details of politics.¹ Partisan this education undoubtedly is, but it supplies almost the only instruction on economic or civic subjects that is afforded the working-class voter.

That there should be any question as to the Socialist attitude toward the higher forms of culture seems surprising when we consider that such culture apostles as William Morris and Oscar Wilde embraced this philosophy as the salvation of the world.² There is hardly a Socialist author who does not rejoice in the hope of a golden age for science and art, pointing to the achievements of the Athenian democracy, imperfect experiment though it was, to show the possibilities of a society where beauty is provided for all and genius is freed from the need of private patronage.³

In the educational work previously mentioned the Socialist Party is, on the whole, true to this ideal. Among the subjects discussed in the workingmen's forums during a recent winter were "The Theater

¹ See Sombart, p. 124, op. cit.

² Oscar Wilde, op. cit., p. 32.

³ Hillquit, op. cit., p. 127.

in Human Civilization," "The Modern School," and "Social Ideals of American Poets," and *The Sunday Call* sets before the workers such essays as "Pragmatism as it Seems to Me," "Social Classes at the Time of the French Revolution," and Veblen's "Development of the Scientific Spirit."¹ A strong impression is made upon the newcomer in the party by the enthusiasm of the working-class members for the opera and drama rather than the vaudeville, for sociology in the broad sense, and for such radical fiction writers as Ibsen and Tolstoi.

There is a contrary force, however, influential among a minority of American Socialists. With those who cling most literally to the doctrines of economic materialism and the class struggle, there exists great emphasis upon "class-consciousness," the realization of and loyalty to a man's own social class. An extreme form of class-consciousness leads at times to that laudation of the manual laborer as such which sometimes appears in American propaganda. In the course of the controversy before alluded to regarding the proletarians and the "intellectuals," a correspondent of *The Call* contributed the following sally:—

"I challenge you to sit down at the bench and make as good a shoe as I make, handle a machine as I do; yes, even sweep the street as I do. Surely, in my work I possess more intellectuality than you do and even than Darwin or Marx did. Why do you lay so much stress and dignity on your kind of intellect and look down on mine? What would your great intellectuality amount to without that of the baker?"²

¹ See N. Y. Call, Dec. 12, 1909, Jan. 16, 1910, Feb. 13, 1910.

² Ibid., Dec. 15, 1909.

Even a mental worker such as Untermann speaks of a "motley crowd of Bohemian intellectuals, who flirt with the revolution, but eschew all contact with its proletarian elements for fear of rubbing the bloom off their refined sensibilities"; and the term "parlor Socialist," applied to these radicals by the conservative press, is sometimes derisively echoed among their own associates.¹

In so far as this ultra-proletarian attitude on the part of certain Socialists suggests that in the popular cause brawn is set above brain, and that in the Socialist commonwealth intellectual pursuits will be regarded as honorable diversions rather than productive labor, it is of serious significance to the American parties.

In summing up this chapter, we find that the program of American Socialism is much more definite in its political and social than in its economic aspects. Based on the conception of complete political and social democracy involved in the permanent conquest of power by the proletariat, it has been expanded by modern Marxians into the ideal of a Socialist society or state which shall differ radically from all previous states, in that it will exist not for oppression but for mutual aid, and will be no longer an isolated and warring nation, but a member of the world's federation of workers. Politically it will involve all measures that tend to give the control of government into the hands of the population as a whole, regardless of sex or class. Socially it will signify the greatest possible measure of personal freedom in all matters of individual concern. Toward the social establishments of the church and the family Socialism remains

¹ Untermann, *Marxian Economics*, p. 27.

neutral, but, while repudiating as unofficial all attacks upon either by its own adherents, it rejects also all claim to inviolability on the part of institutions that are the outgrowth of constantly evolving economic conditions. While popular education, including the higher forms of culture, is demanded as the foundation of the social democracy, and while the Socialist parties declare themselves to be an efficient factor in such education, the exaltation of the manual laborer by certain Socialists at the expense of the so-called "intellectual" is a tendency which works to some extent against this general ideal.

To the revolutionist the political and social program constitutes the essence of the movement as far as the Socialist parties are concerned, to the constructivist the economic program; to both the triumph of Socialism will be complete only when the political, social, and industrial democracy has been permanently established.

CHAPTER XII

THE IMMEDIATE PROGRAM OF AMERICAN SOCIALISM

IT has already been noticed that the leaders of Marxian Socialism have hitherto spent the greater part of their energies first on the analysis of present conditions and second on the immediate or transitional demands of present legislation, leaving largely to the Utopians the details of the ultimate industrial structure. This emphasis is justifiable from the point of view of scientific Socialism, in that, while the economic forces that are to produce the ultimate details have not yet been perfected, the immediate demands are based upon social relations that are the direct consequence of present industrial conditions.

The *Communist Manifesto* laid stress on immediate demands, but American Socialism is by no means unanimous in advocating all that appear in the program.¹ In the same way that the German Socialists formerly elected representatives merely for purposes of protest, so the more "revolutionary" of the American party still advise the use of the franchise for only two purposes. The first of these is the frightening of the older parties into themselves passing the legislation demanded by the workers, a policy which draws strength from the concessions to

¹ P. 32-33.

Socialism made by the German government from time to time since the days of Bismarck; ¹ the second is the gaining for the workers of full political liberty and of complete freedom in industrial organizations. All attempts at economic legislation are to be postponed until a Socialist majority shall have given the proletariat complete control. The platform of the Socialist Labor Party thus contains no immediate demands, and in the Socialist Party a member of the National Committee has declared: "We can shove the whole reform sentiment out of the party and be the better for it." ² Nevertheless, the fact of the inclusion of such demands in the platform of 1908 shows that the majority are of the opinion of Thompson: —

"Unless constructive methods are adopted by the Socialist Party as a national organization, the party will become a complete failure. The time has come when our party must go *forward* or it will surely go *backward*." ³

Almost without exception the immediate demands of American Socialism are either obvious steps toward the ultimate program previously presented or measures identical with those already advocated by other bodies of reformers. ⁴ We may therefore leave detailed analysis to special treatments of the reforms in question, pausing only to outline each and to point out where necessary the Socialist atti-

¹ See Hunter, *Soc. at Work*, p. 179, 223; N. Y. Call, May 26, 1910, Editorial.

² *Weekly Bull.*, March 7, 1908.

³ *Ibid.*, Jan. 12, 1907.

⁴ The immediate demands mentioned in this chapter are found on p. 6-8 of the National S. P. Platform for 1908.

tude to other organizations working for the same ends. It may be noted in general that the Socialists, according to their degree of "revolutionism," maintain a decided suspicion of all reform proposals emanating from non-Socialist quarters. This suspicion manifests itself in expressions ranging from salutary criticism to denunciations and impugment of motive, the heading "Capitalist Reform Futile," in the national platform, being illustrative of the general Socialist sentiment.¹

The demands fall under three heads, — measures tending directly to improve the condition of the working-class, those aiming toward a pure democracy, and those that may form instalments of the ultimate commonwealth.

First among these are the measures of industrial reform. An acceptance of the doctrine of increasing misery in its extreme form would tend to discourage any attempts toward immediate amelioration on the score that only a desperate proletariat could be ripe for revolution. As has been explained, however, the extreme interpretation has never characterized Marxism, Marx and Engels declaring, as far back as the *Manifesto*, that "the social scum" is less fit to take part in the social revolution than to become the tool of reactionary intrigue.² Von Vollmar expresses the German policy in his declaration that the person who has sunk below a certain standard of living is adapted to a street riot rather than to political effort, and that therefore a degraded working class cannot form the material for socialism.³

"The Socialists," writes Hillquit, "attach the greatest importance to all reforms of this character.

¹ Nat. Plat., p. 5.

² P. 21.

³ Kampffmeyer, op. cit., p. 29.

They realize that the task of transforming the modern capitalist society into a Socialist commonwealth can be accomplished only by the conscious, systematic, and persevering efforts of a working class physically, mentally and morally fit for the assumption of the reins of government, and not by a blind revolt of a furious and desperate rabble.”¹

The first industrial demand in the national platform is the shortening of the work-day in keeping with the increased productiveness of machinery. The New York Municipal Program narrows this down to the eight-hour day for city employés; and the Socialists of the Wisconsin legislature have succeeded in securing an eight-hour law for telegraphers.² Among the bills of the latter for the session of 1909 are included one limiting the hours of labor for women and another prescribing an average ten-hour day for bakers. In all Socialist agitation much stress is laid upon the progressive shortening of the work-day, but the Socialist arguments in its favor are invariably based not upon the usual claim of a resulting advantage to the employer in the improved quality of labor, but upon that of advantage to the workingman in bettered personal conditions and lessening of unemployment. A rest period of not less than a day and a half in each week is a further demand of the national and Wisconsin programs.

The indefinite national demand of “a more effective inspection of workshops and factories” and the New York demand for union conditions are sup-

¹ P. 214, *Socialism in Theory and Practice*.

² For these and similar following statements the authorities are the N. Y. Municipal Program, q. v., and Winfield Gaylord, *The Call*, Jan. 16, 1910. See also Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 49.

plemented in the Wisconsin legislative program by provisions for the publication of labor contracts, for ventilation of manufacturing establishments, and for the laying of temporary floors at every story of new buildings. Among the measures passed in Wisconsin are two securing respectively guard rails for dangerous machinery and blowers for carrying off metallic dust.¹

While the national program calls for the prohibition of the employment of children under 16 years of age, the Wisconsin Socialists have not yet presented so drastic a measure. They have given special attention to the matter of child labor, however, and have aided materially in securing such reforms as the exclusion of children under 14 from the handling of dangerous machinery and the restriction of those under 16 to 55 hours of labor per week.² As individuals, American Socialists frequently coöperate in the work of the National Child Labor Committee.

A kindred demand of the national platform is the forbidding of the interstate transportation of the products of child labor, of convict labor, and of all uninspected factories. There is prescribed the abolition of "official charity" and the substitution in its place of compulsory insurance against unemployment, illness, accidents, invalidism, old age, and death, a demand which is followed substantially by the New York program. In Wisconsin the Socialist legislators have secured the right of counties to pension blind persons and have performed vigorous work in the committee on insurance and in working out a careful compensation act.³ One of the first bills to

¹ Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 46.

² *Ibid.*, p. 51.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 47, 57.

be introduced in Congress by Victor Berger provides for a pension of four dollars per week for workers sixty years of age who have resided in the country for twenty-one years and received a salary of less than \$1000 per year.

A significant illustration of the growing tendency of the Socialist Party toward definite constructive work has recently been afforded by the New York local organization in connection with its participation in the hearings of the Wainwright Commission on workmen's compensation. Although the action was directly opposed by the more "revolutionary" members as asking favors from the capitalist government, a committee was officially appointed to appear before the commission jointly with a committee from the labor unions of the city. A plan was submitted, modelled to a great extent upon the English acts; and, as the bill recommended by the Wainwright Commission and passed by the legislature failed to come up to this standard and was afterwards declared unconstitutional, the local Socialist Party is preparing to continue the fight for the act originally proposed. Most important of all, the coöperation with the labor unions has proved so satisfactory that a permanent joint committee upon the subject has been formed in which Socialists and unions are continuing to work together for a more radical compensation act.

The belittling of "official charity" is somewhat typical of the Socialist attitude toward benevolent institutions in general. While the doctrine of increasing misery is held by but few, yet the Marxist regards the attempts of philanthropy as mere palliatives. The Socialist and the settlement or charity

worker frequently indeed meet in the same person, but it is usually the case that the work has led to Socialism through discouragement with conditions, rather than that Socialism has led to the work. A prominent charity worker in New York recently resigned his official position on the ground that it hampered his freedom for the service of Socialism. There is sometimes even a tendency to regard the charitable societies as the almoners of capitalism and thus members of the opposing camp; and, without directly antagonizing the institutions for the immediate relief of poverty, the Socialist usually turns his attention rather to the work of propaganda and education, as to him more fundamental, if also more remote methods of dealing with social evils.

The *Appeal to Reason* thus characterized the gift of the Russell Sage Foundation in 1907:—

“Mrs. Russell Sage has given ten millions as a fund to investigate poverty and crime. That she put it in the possession of a lot of professional charity workers shows how good intentions are often made the victim of lack of knowledge. Charity is a money-making profession in these days of prosperity, and the whole fund will simply be used to hold the system that produces poverty so the job of spending it will last.”¹

In Europe, as well as in America, Socialists work as the direct political representatives of the labor movement;² and among the few immediate demands approved by the revolutionist faction are the right of all classes of government employés to strike and the legalization of the primary, secondary, and ter-

¹ March 30, 1907.

² Hunter, *Socialists at Work*, p. 186.

tiary boycott. William E. Walling classes these among the "revolutionary" demands, — those which no capitalist party will ever steal from the Socialists until the proletarian triumph is at hand.¹ In the United States it is the state or the local, rather than the national program, that deals with the rights of labor organizations. The Wisconsin legislative program here frequently referred to was formulated jointly by the Socialist legislators, the party executives, and the representatives of the Wisconsin State Federation of Labor and the Milwaukee Federated Trades Council. We accordingly have the following bills upon the list: restricting the use of private detectives, giving trades unions the right peacefully to obtain information and to persuade any person to quit work, allowing two or more persons to coöperate in a trade dispute, and providing that no union shall be sued for damages caused by a member of the same. The Socialists of Milwaukee have passed through the city council an indirect endorsement of union labor; and Mayor Seidel expressly prohibited the police of that city from interference in a local strike. The Socialist member of the Massachusetts legislature, Mr. Morrill, has been successful in a bill requiring every employer at whose establishment a strike is in progress to make the fact known in advertising for workmen.²

The restriction of immigration is a demand which, while almost always present in non-Socialist labor agitation, has thus far failed to appear in the platform of the Socialist Party, owing to the principle of international solidarity. Discussion has al-

¹ Walling, N. Y. Call, Dec. 12, 1909.

² N. Y. Call, May 31, 1910.

ready begun, however, which indicates that American Socialists are being forced into a position contrary to that of the Marxians in Europe. At the Stuttgart International Socialist Congress of 1907, Morris Hillquit differed from the majority upon the subject of immigration. Upon his return he was supported by the National Executive Committee and by a party referendum in a resolution against the immigration to America of the Oriental races, because of their tendency to bring down the living standard among workers. A statement in the official Study Course, however, is as follows:—

“The Socialist remedy is [not] to prevent immigration (except in so far as this is promoted by false representations for the purpose of glutting the labor market), but to promote the naturalization and assimilation of immigrants.”¹

The last Congress of the Socialist Party gave especial attention to the question of immigration. “In a vigorous and prolonged debate Untermann, as spokesman for the majority of a special committee elected at the 1908 convention to report on the subject, argued ably for the exclusion of all Oriental laborers; Spargo, as author of a minority report, vigorously opposed the exclusion of any race or races at this time. His position differed from that taken by the Stuttgart Congress in that he admitted that if the workers of America were forced, in order to protect their standards of living, to restrict immigration or prohibit it altogether they would be justified in doing so. He denied, however, that any such necessity yet exists or seems imminent, and empha-

¹ N. Y. Call, March 7, 1910.

sized the contention that the remedy for the evils incidental to immigration is educational and organizing work among the immigrant workers. He declared that exclusion of the worker would avail nothing, since there could be no exclusion of the product of Oriental or other foreign labor from the world market. In the end a substitute resolution, offered by Hillquit, affirming in general the Stuttgart resolution, but favoring the prohibition of 'mass importation' of foreign labor by the capitalist class, was adopted."

It is unnecessary to enlarge further than has been done upon the generally intimate connection between Socialism and organized labor, and upon the series of antagonisms that at present renders the American Federation of Labor officially hostile to Socialism, though containing within itself many Socialists. It must be remembered, on the other hand, that several bodies of organized labor are avowedly Socialist,¹ and that the relation of the labor unions to the Socialist Party is now a live issue in both ranks.

There is one phase of labor activity, however, to which Socialists are in unqualified opposition, — namely, the conciliatory movement manifested in the National Civic Federation. Union officials who have accepted positions with that body are either denounced as traitors or ridiculed as dupes, and its capitalist members are charged with aiming merely to render labor submissive by flattery and false claims of identity of interest. The *S. P. Official Bulletin* states: —

¹ According to Hunter, these unions include 660,000 members (N. Y. Call, June 9, 1910).

“ This organization has definitely entered the lists as an anti-Socialist institution and must henceforth be classed with the London Municipal Society as collaborators in defense of capitalism.”¹

While Socialists recognize workmen's coöperatives as a part of their own class struggle, they look with suspicion upon such partially coöperative schemes as profit-sharing and the issuance of stock to workmen. Even the philanthropic employer meets only a grudging commendation, and such an institution as Nelson's establishment at Le Claire is viewed as an effort to confuse the issue of the struggle, and, like the Civic Federation, to soothe the worker into a dangerous relaxation of vigilance.²

The political demands of Socialism, as mentioned before, are a portion of the immediate program upon which there is unanimity among all shades of Socialists. Not only do they believe that the coöperative commonwealth could never endure under the present political system, but they realize that in order to procure any considerable portion of their economic program they must first bring the control into the hands of the popular majority rather than of the financially powerful minority.

“ Every Socialist party in the world,” writes Mr. Walling, “ puts political democracy first on its program, including those devices — a secret ballot, proportional representation and direct legislation — which are found absolutely essential to its effective operation.”³

¹ Bull., January, 1910. —

² L. Kopelin in N. Y. Worker, July 13, 1907.

³ N. Y. Call, Nov. 7, 1909.

First of these is the demand common to every Socialist platform in the world, — unrestricted and equal suffrage for men and women. In the Socialist Party the women have recently secured the addition to the demand of an actual pledge to engage in an active campaign in that direction, and since its insertion the party has come vigorously to the support of its women agitators. A Woman's National Committee has been created with a special General Correspondent, and Local Woman's Committees exist as integral parts of the various local organizations.¹ Last year, for the first time, a woman, Lena Morrow Lewis, was elected to the National Executive Committee. The party has designated the last Sunday in February as Women's Day, on which special suffrage propaganda is engaged in throughout the country.

The Socialist women in New York have decided in convention to keep their work generally distinct from the non-socialist suffrage organizations, coöperating with them only occasionally and for definite purposes.² There is, however, far less friction between Socialist and "bourgeois" suffragists than appears between the Socialists and reformers in other fields. Socialist women are in the habit of joining the workers for Woman Suffrage in public speaking, circulating petitions, arranging demonstrations, and appearing before legislative committees; and opponents of the suffrage are beginning to use the association of the movement with Socialism as an argument in its disfavor.³

¹ S. P. Off. Bull., December, 1910.

² A. C. Block, N. Y. Call, Dec. 19, 1909.

³ N. Y. Call, Jan. 5, 1910.

The New York municipal program includes Woman Suffrage in its demands, and the Wisconsin legislators have made efforts in this direction, so far without success. Representative Morrill has made himself the active champion of Woman Suffrage in the Massachusetts legislature.

The Study Course in Socialism enlarges the demand to universal, equal, direct and secret suffrage.¹ It suggests agitation for direct suffrage chiefly in the case of the election of senators, and considers the principle of secret suffrage fairly well secured by the use of the Australian ballot, although needing in many states to be perfected in details. It gives as a further aim of Socialism: —

“The removal of all restrictions based on ancestry, on race or nativity, on sex, on the possession of property, on education or on length of residence except in so far as this last may be necessary to prevent the corrupt practices known as ‘colonization’ or the voting of ‘floaters.’ ”¹

The national program seeks to secure direct legislation by the initiative and referendum, proportional representation, and the right of recall, and the New York platform emphasizes all but the third. The Social Democrats of Wisconsin have steadily worked for direct legislation, both generally and in specific instances, and are introducing this year bills providing for the recall in the case of local officers, for the initiative and referendum on acts of municipal councils or county boards, and the amendment of city charters by direct action of the people.

It may be noted that each of these political princi-

¹ N. Y. Call, March 7, 1910.

ples is employed in the internal affairs of the Socialist Party, as of the labor unions, and that, while the right of recall does not yet exist, the Socialist Party always requires of the candidate for public office a signed resignation to be presented to the proper authorities in case of a violation of trust.

The national demand for the abolition of the Senate is in harmony with the international Socialist demand for doing away with the upper parliamentary house. The Wisconsin legislators have proposed resolutions to this effect; and Berger, during his first month in Congress, introduced a bill to abolish the Senate and substitute for it the referendum as a check upon the House of Representatives.

The national program calls for the abolition of the power of the Supreme Court to pass upon the constitutionality of legislation and for the repeal or abrogation of national laws only by act of Congress or popular referendum. The New York platform adds: —

“A show of power, by an increased vote of the Socialist Party and the election of some of its candidates will be an effective warning to the capitalistic courts that will make them pause in their despotic course.”

While most of the purely political planks of the Socialist platform appear also as reforms proposed by other radicals, the amendability of the Constitution by majority vote is one of the demands considered by William English Walling so revolutionary as to be exclusively Socialist property.¹ The Wisconsin Socialists are agitating, so far without success,

¹ N. Y. Call, Dec. 12, 1909.

for both state and national constitutional conventions, and Berger has introduced into Congress a bill providing for the latter.

Reform of the judiciary branch of government is demanded in that all judges be elected by the people for short terms, and that the power to issue injunctions be curbed by immediate legislation. The New York platform gives merely a general denunciation of the injunction. Although Mr. Walling classes the abolition of the injunction as one of the revolutionary demands never to be passed until the triumph of Socialism, the Wisconsin Social Democrats are already introducing into the legislature resolutions on both subjects mentioned above.¹

Administrative demands include a graduated income tax and the extension of inheritance taxes, graduated in proportion to the amount of the bequest and nearness of kin. The New York Socialists confine their tax reform, however, chiefly to demanding that the arrears of taxes due to the city from private corporations be immediately collected, and the efforts in Wisconsin are directed to such details as the semi-annual payment of taxes and the valuation of land for public purposes by adding 10% to the last previous assessed valuation thereof.

Says the Study Course in Socialism: ² —

“Socialists are not dogmatic free traders, and do not consider free trade in itself a thing worth striving for. They are in general, however, opposed to indirect taxation — tariffs on imports or exports, excises, trade licenses, etc., — especially in so far as these tend to raise the prices of the necessities of life.

¹ N. Y. Call, Dec. 12, 1909. }

. ² Ibid., March 21, 1910.

They seek to introduce and promote the use of the graduated income tax and the graduated inheritance tax as the principal sources of government revenue. These taxes are advocated by Socialists, not as a means of equalizing wealth or of checking its concentration, but as a means of furnishing the government with the necessary revenues with the least hardship to the producing classes."

Socialists differ from Single Taxers in refusing to differentiate from the "indirect" tax on real property a "direct" tax on land values.¹ Both stand for the general principle of land nationalization, but while the Single Taxer wishes to nationalize all land values and no capital goods, the Socialist draws the line rather between the land and capital goods used socially on the one hand, and those employed for individual purposes on the other. As before stated, capital denotes to the Marxian a relationship and not a mere thing. The Socialists and followers of Henry George meet at many points in their arraignment of conditions that produce poverty, their emphasis upon democracy and free opportunity, and their denunciation of the private control of natural resources. There has been frequent passing to and fro between the lines, and once a temporary alliance, but, in so far as the Single Tax looks to a restoration of competition, it leans rather toward the radical Democrats, and is thus opposed by Socialism.

A demand illustrative of "class-consciousness" is that for the separation of the present Bureau of Labor from the Department of Commerce and Labor, and the establishment of an independent Department of Labor.

¹ Hillquit, *op. cit.*, p. 289, 295.

The most fundamental of the social demands is that for the absolute freedom of press, speech, and assemblage. The Socialists of Wisconsin have apparently passed beyond the need for this demand with their conquest of a degree of political power, but the New York platform makes of it a special article, coupling with it the right to freedom of Sunday recreation. The Socialists are always active in agitating for these claims, and have recently assisted the Industrial Workers of the World in Spokane, the officials of the American Federation of Labor, and the revolutionists in Spain and Mexico in their conflicts with the authorities on these matters.¹

The free administration of justice is a demand of the national platform which has been approached by the Wisconsin Socialists through measures providing that the cost of appeal may under certain circumstances be borne by the state and that a "public defender" be appointed in each county to conduct cases of the poor.² At present, however, the Socialists in that state appear to be dealing chiefly with minor reforms in the conduct of the lower courts.

There is a call for the enactment of further measures for general education and for the conservation of health, the formation of the Bureau of Education into a Department, and the creation of a Department of Public Health. New York makes much of the subject of education, asking that

"public kindergartens and playgrounds be established in connection with every school, that ample school accommodations be provided and an adequate force of teachers be provided, and that meals, cloth-

¹ See Account of Free Speech League, Call, May 21, 1910.

² Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 52, 56.

ing, and medical attendance be furnished to all school children who may require them."

The Wisconsin Socialists are active in the department of education, directing their efforts chiefly toward the extension of trade and agricultural schools, and of the university system, and toward the supplying of free text-books throughout the state. Although for some time previous to 1911 they had been represented by several members on the Milwaukee School Board,¹ the reaction following the Socialist victory of 1910 was so strong as to drive the Socialists, for a time at least, from this department of the city government.

The public health is considered in the New York program by proposals for protection against accident to laborers on public works, for the erection by the city of model dwellings to be let at cost, and for an efficient system of municipal hospitals and medical service. One of the resolutions carried through the city council of Milwaukee by the Socialists provided for a \$300 appropriation to bring a tuberculosis exhibit to the city; and one of the first acts of Mayor Seidel of that city was to appoint as Health Commissioner, against the wishes of partisan Socialists, a non-Socialist expert.²

First in the national program by virtue of their essentially Socialist character, but last in the practical efforts of the party in view of their necessary postponement in perfection to the time of Socialism triumphant, are the demands for the public ownership and control of capital.

¹ Hunter, New York Call, Mar. 17, 1910.

² Thompson, op. cit., p. 39. Emil Seidel in N. Y. Call, June 2, 1910.

Of greatest practical importance is that for

“the immediate government relief for the unemployed workers by building schools, by reforestation of cut-over and waste lands, by reclamation of arid tracts, and the building of canals, and by extending all other useful public works. All persons employed on such works shall be employed directly by the government under an eight-hour workday and at the prevailing union wages. The government shall also loan money to states and municipalities without interest for the purpose of carrying on public works.”

The New York Socialists ask

“that the powers of the city government shall be so extended as to enable it to engage in any industry or public works it may see fit to undertake, especially during industrial crises, for the purpose of giving employment to those thrown out of work.”

They devote the greater part of their program to an amplification of this demand, including immediate work for the unemployed on the proposed subways, bridges, etc., the reclamation of all franchises now held by private corporations, and the acquiring and operating by the city of all street railways, ferries, gas and electric plants, telephones, ice plants, coal yards, milk depots, etc., with the application of the income from these industries to the improvement of the condition of the mass of employes and of the public service.

The Milwaukee Socialists have secured for their city the promise of a municipal lighting plant, after a long struggle extending through the city council and the state legislature, but the courts have so far pre-

sented obstacles to the actual establishment of the enterprise.¹ They are working for the establishment of a municipal plumbing business, and for a succession of franchise bills tending to secure city control and ultimate public ownership of public utilities.

The attitude of Socialists toward Municipal Ownership parties and government ownership in general is a frequent source of misunderstanding. Since the ownership of the means of production by society is the most conspicuous feature of ultimate Socialism, the student is often at a loss to comprehend the lack of enthusiasm among Socialists for the "public utilities" planks that every now and then appear in a third party platform, or for the successful experiments in municipal ownership that have been conducted by European cities. Collectivism, however, is to the Socialist not an end, but a means to the goal of the abolition of exploitation. As a method of attaining this end, the ownership of industry by the present state seems to him of but doubtful advantage, and in no case worth the price of compromise.² He accepts the argument of the anti-Socialist that, in view of the present corruption of American government, any such experiment stands a large chance of failure, and believes that in that case it is likely to be quoted as an instance of the impracticability of Socialism. If it succeeds, on the other hand, under the jurisdiction of a capitalist government, the laboring class will not necessarily receive appreciable benefit. According to the principle of economic self-interest, any middle-class party which secures government ownership may be expected to carry on this

¹ Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 15, 17.

² Slobodin, *Call*, Oct. 31, Nov. 21, 1909.

industry for the advantage of the middle class; and only an avowedly working-class party can be counted on to manage production in the interest of the workers.

The Study Course explains clearly the Socialist attitude on this point:

“In advocating public ownership Socialists declare, and in helping to effect it they will seek to make sure, that it shall not be regarded or used as a means of providing revenue for the government and thus relieving the propertied classes from taxation. . . . The first care of the government or municipality should be to improve and extend the service and to improve the condition of the workers employed. Furthermore, in this connection, the Socialist Party must be alert to use its own influence and enlist that of the labor unions to prevent public employes being brought under a semi-military discipline and deprived of civil and political rights by reason of their being in public employ.”¹

The national program next prescribes the collective ownership of all means of social transportation and communication, including railroads, telegraphs, telephones, and steamship lines, the words “and all land” having been stricken out by referendum as explained in a previous chapter. The original paragraph relating to land is somewhat vague, reading as follows:

“That occupancy and use of land be the sole title to possession. The scientific reforestation of timber lands and the reclamation of swamp lands. The

¹ N. Y. Call, Mar. 21, 1910.

land so reforested or reclaimed to be permanently retained as a part of the public domain."

The referendum just mentioned, however, has added to the platform a series of statements as to land (quoted above, p. 124), which indicate clearly the probability of only a partial nationalization of land under a Socialist regime.

This portion of the national demands is completed by a call for the collective ownership of all industries which are organized on a national scale and in which competition has virtually ceased to exist, and of such natural resources as mines, quarries, oil wells, forests, and water power. The party in Wisconsin are working at present to influence Congress toward the taking over of all railroads which pass into the hands of a federal receiver, and ultimately all railroads, express companies, telegraph and telephone plants, and all trusts and monopolies. They have introduced and supported resolutions to preserve the state control of water power, and are now agitating for a state board of public works, aiming at the retention and extension of natural resources in general. The parcels post and postal savings banks also are reforms coming under the Wisconsin program.

The entire problem of monopolies furnishes a test for distinguishing the Socialist from the social reformer. The most conspicuous reform in America at present is that dealing with the control of corporations and the restoration of competition by the enforcement of anti-trust and railroad laws. The party Socialist, however, holds distinctly aloof from these movements. According to the Socialist philosophy, the trust is the natural transitional form between individualist and socialist enterprise. It has

come to stay, and, as the economic power must always be superior to the merely political, any attempt to check or control it cannot escape the fate of the various other laws that have attempted to turn back the tide of industrial development.

"They are bound to perish," says the national platform, "as the numerous middle class reform movements of the past have perished."¹

The *Appeal to Reason* expresses the same point of view:

"The Apostles of Compromise are with us to-day talking of regulation and control. But capitalism refuses the dose — and so it, too, must be abolished."²

We have in this chapter compared the demands of the national platform of the Socialist Party with those of the New York Municipal Program, the working Social-Democratic faction in the Wisconsin legislature, and the Social-Democratic government of Milwaukee. Of these the New York program is on the whole less definite than the national, giving more space to denunciation of abuses than to constructive measures, — the natural attitude of a party of protest; the Wisconsin plan, on the contrary, is that of actual law-makers, revolutionary and protesting in matters beyond the legislative horizon, but utilitarian and diplomatic regarding measures under present consideration, making haste slowly and grasping at half a loaf when the whole seems out of reach. These two points of view are typical of the divisions

¹ Platform, p. 6.

² Appeal to Reason, Aug. 3, 1907.

in Socialist tactics, later on to be discussed in greater detail.

The attitude of Socialism to non-socialist plans of amelioration has appeared at several points in this chapter, and it has been evident that the *bona fide* Socialist, whether constructivist or revolutionist, differs fundamentally from the most radical social reformer. Where the latter supports every movement that in itself works for social betterment and opposes every one of an opposite tendency, the Socialist asks first the relation of the movement to the working class and the social revolution. Of all the ameliorative institutions outside itself, the Socialist Party gives unqualified support only to the labor unions and the workmen's coöperatives.

There are, indeed, a number of Socialists intimately associated with the party members and exercising a decided influence among them who remain unaffiliated for the very reason that they wish freedom to support any reform that seems of itself good; but the motto, "*Timeo Danaos et dona ferentes*," represents the typical attitude of the Socialist parties of America.

CHAPTER XIII

THE SOCIALIST METHOD OF ATTAINMENT — PARTY ORGANIZATION AND TACTICS

ALTHOUGH the *Communist Manifesto* contains at least a suggestion of violence, and although Marx was not without dreams of a catastrophie and bloody revolution, the whole activity of that leader goes to show that these dreams were merely lapses into Utopianism and that his real ideal was that of a peaceful "revolutionary" evolution.¹ Therefore the Socialist Party is Marxian in that the advocacy of physical force forms no part of its propaganda, either public or private. Victor Berger declares that the road to a peaceful revolution, without violent upheavals and cataclysms, is by way of the Socialist ticket.²

According to Debs,

"The working-class intends to use its political power, through the machinery of popular government and free elections, to force compliance with its demands by peaceful, legal, and constitutional methods, to the end that wage slavery may be entirely abolished." ³

While the previous declarations are consistent with the opposition of Socialists towards all war, yet they

¹ Spargo, *Sidelights*, etc., p. 43.

² Soc. Campaign Book, 1908, p. 23.

³ Soc. Campaign Book, 1908, p. 5.

hope for, rather than promise, a revolution by peaceful means, and it cannot be said that the majority have adopted the Quaker attitude toward physical violence. It is recognized that the working-class bears the brunt of internal as well as foreign conflict, and that in a country of universal suffrage the ballot is more effectual than the bullet. The economic determinism of Socialist philosophy, moreover, precludes any ethical condemnation of individuals or classes, and thus leaves no logical place for vindictiveness. Many Socialists, on the other hand, believe that capitalism will not yield to expropriation without physical struggle, and the more ardent spirits do not always conceal their enthusiasm at the prospect. American Socialists are usually in whole-hearted sympathy with revolutionists all over the world, excusing bomb-throwing in such countries as Russia by the fact that the people are excluded from the weapons of peaceful political activity. While violence in labor disputes is not advocated by Socialists, arguments against it are seldom based on any other ground than expediency; and a certain element in the Socialist Party, represented chiefly by the "revolutionists" of the industrial organizations, tend to look upon physical conflict as an essential accompaniment of the economic or political struggle between classes.¹

Modern international Socialism, as the organized expression of the class struggle, works through three accepted channels, — the labor union, the coöperative, and the political party. While the social revolution could conceivably be accomplished through the

¹ See L. Duchez in *I. S. R.*, Nov. 1909, p. 410, and Robt. Wheeler in the same, April, 1910, p. 883.

third alone, the first form of the movement, and to a less extent the second, are of importance in raising the immediate condition of the working class and in preparing them for united action.

The coöperative, which in Belgium is the close partner of Socialism, is here only beginning, after many sporadic attempts and failures. Aside from the general difficulty of workmen's societies in acquiring the necessary capital, the American coöperative attempts have been especially hindered by the circumstances of a polyglot population, an estrangement between Socialism and the more powerful labor organizations, and the rival power of the trusts. At present, however, there are in various American towns a small but growing number of distributive coöperative societies under Socialist control or influence. A strong impetus has recently been given to the movement in New York by the formation of several general coöperatives, that which has met with the strongest Socialist support being the American Wholesale Coöperative.¹ This association has entered into an alliance with the Chicago Wholesale Coöperative, with which it has divided the territory of the Eastern United States.² It is modeled upon the Belgian rather than the Rochdale plan, having but one class of members, the stockholders, who receive full dividends. Outside buyers are given certificates entitling them to membership if they so desire whenever their purchases have reached a specified amount. As in the Belgian societies, a certain percentage of profit is to be devoted to propaganda,

¹ Coöperation; The Coöperative League; P. Vlag in N. Y. Call, Dec. 19, 1909; M. Kaplan, Call, Feb. 6, 1910.

² N. Y. Call, March 7, 1910.

and another portion to benefit features, the incentive of money-making being much less pronounced than in the Rochdale plan. Beginning by supplying goods to the retail coöperatives already existing, the society hopes to extend their number and unite them eventually into an economic power, but no attempt at productive coöperation will be made until a firm basis for distribution is secured. As the American Wholesale Coöperative has existed but little over a year, it is too early to make any judgment as to its efficiency.

While in most European countries the labor unions and the Socialists are very closely connected, in the United States, as we have noticed, there is a complex situation, in which the largest labor organization in the country is still opposed to independent political action. The relation of Socialism to organized labor furnishes an important problem to the Socialist Party at present, giving rise, on the one hand, to suggestions of the formation of a Labor Party upon the English lines, and on the other to a line of policy based upon that of the Syndicalists and anti-parliamentarians of Southern Europe.¹ Leaving the matter of the Labor Party to a later chapter, we will here note briefly the differing views in the latter controversy.

An active minority in the Socialist Party, while they do not go so far as to advise against participation in politics, are yet inclined to belittle it more or less as compared with economic organization. While a growing control of the government is advantageous to the proletariat in that it will prevent the use of the judiciary and the military against them, it is not by legislative processes that the workers are to obtain

¹ See Sombart, *op. cit.*, p. 100, *seq.*

emancipation, but by the "direct action" of popular demonstrations, the boycott and the general strike. Sorel, the French Syndicalist, writes:

"The day is perhaps not so far distant when the best definition of Socialism will be 'General Strike.'"¹

Since this direct action involves the use of physical rather than moral means, the purely industrial weapon of the strike is frequently supplemented by that of passive resistance, as in the free speech fight in Spokane, and sometimes by actual or threatened violence, as certain Socialists claim with regard to the strike at McKees Rocks in 1909.²

American Socialism has made no official declarations regarding the general strike, and the constructivist leaders, Hillquit, Hunter, Berger, and Gaylord, emphasize this fact in maintaining that it has found no place in the American tactics thus far. Spargo considers the likelihood of its being employed here as very remote; but Simons, Work, and James F. Carey deem it possibly a valuable weapon for use in an extremity.

W. E. Walling, a vigorous advocate of direct action, believes that the efforts of the Socialist Party should be directed to securing for the laborer freedom in such action:

"The sympathetic strike, the boycott, primary, secondary, and in every other form, the fight for the rights of free speech and free press, the fight against the police and military rule, the fight against the courts, . . . and, finally, the fight for national labor

¹ Quoted by Sombart, p. 107.

² Duchez in I. S. R., Nov., 1910, p. 410.

legislation, which we can only obtain after we have bridled and conquered the courts, here is a constructive program that is already accepted by millions of the American working people, Socialists and Trade Unionists alike. . . . This is the only constructive program. All other 'constructive' proposals amount merely to the appointment of legislative commissions, lobbying committees, etc., to act as a body of assistants to the social reformers, to men like Hearst, Gaynor, Hughes, or La Follette." ¹

The opponents of the general strike are represented by Louis Wetmore, a writer in the *New York Call*.² The general strike is first defined as the simultaneous stoppage of work by most of the men in most of the productive trades. After explaining the conditions under which it may be successful in securing definite and concrete demands such as the eight-hour day, the writer goes on to consider its availability as a means to securing the general control of industry by the people. He comes to the conclusion that it is

"the most extreme and dangerous of tactics that the working class can use; for, as Jaures has aptly shown, it has got to succeed the first time; . . . we cannot use this weapon to obtain the collective control of industry at one blow, because that control is 'too large an order' to be secured in that way."

Finally, says Mr. Wetmore, it is essentially the weapon of a minority, and hence cannot be used to usher in the social revolution.

While the Socialist Party has refrained from a declaration as to the form of labor organization, the

¹ N. Y. Call, Mar. 22, 1910.

² Ibid., Mar. 21, 1910.

Socialist Labor Party, in 1908, resolved against "Neutrality" toward Trade Unions, taking its stand definitely for the industrial union as against the craft organization, and for the necessity of "backing up the ballot" with the forces of organized labor.¹

The political party, always the chief weapon of Socialism, is in this country its only considerable manifestation. It bears little resemblance, however, to the political party as we know it in the United States. While the Republican or Democratic Party consists chiefly of a vast and shifting body of voters centering about one permanent inner circle of practical legislators and another of professional politicians, and confining their duties for the most part to Election Day, the mission of the Socialist parties is to "agitate, educate, organize"; thus the matters of preparing platforms, nominating candidates, and winning votes are merely incidental to the work of propaganda and organization of the working-class. It is of some importance, therefore, to study its organization and routine methods before taking up the more complex matter of tactics.

Any man or woman is eligible for membership in the Socialist Party who is over eighteen years of age, who will sign the pledge already reproduced, recognizing the class struggle, and severing connections with other political parties, and who will subscribe to the principles of the party, specifically including political action.²

The only exceptions to eligibility are persons holding offices honorary or remunerative, other than civil

¹ Resolution presented at Stuttgart Congress, 1908, S. L. P. Plat., p. 27.

² S. P. Nat. Const., Art. 2, Sec. 1, 5.

service positions, and including the office of post-master, by gift of any other political party.¹ It is important to note also that any member who opposes political action is to be expelled.²

The Socialist Labor Party provides that no one be allowed to become a member until the presiding officer has explained to him the significance of the class struggle and until he has signed a catechism of six questions bearing upon the principles of the party.³

In 1910 the membership of the Socialist Party numbered 58,011, thus constituting less than 10% of the national vote (604,756).⁴ The facts that fully 5% of these are under voting age, 5% are women, and another small percentage are aliens, reduce still further the proportion of the party membership to its voting strength.⁵ It is by the former, however, rather than the latter, that the growth and quality of the Socialist Party are to be measured, as the party members constitute the dictators of policy, the definitely Socialist propagandists, and the permanent organizers of the fluctuating adherents represented by the official vote. In 1908 an attempt was made by the National Executive Committee to collect statistical facts regarding the membership, and, though less than 15% of the party were included in the results, records are given from 39 different states, which seem to be fairly representative.⁵ A large majority, 71% of the members, are of American birth, the nations ranking next being, in order, Germany, the Scandinavian countries, Eng-

¹ S. P. Nat. Const., June 11, 1908.

² Nat. Const., Art. 2, Sec. 2, 6.

³ Prin. of the S. L. P.

⁴ S. P. Off. Bull., Jan., 1911. Thompson, *The Rising Tide of Socialism*.

⁵ S. P. Off. Bull., April, 1909.

land, Finland, and Austria. The mean age occurs between 30 and 40 years for both men and women. Classification as to occupation shows that 41% of the party are craftsmen, and, as among the states omitted from the records are the manufacturing states of Massachusetts and Connecticut, it is probable that this percentage is still higher in the country as a whole. Laborers are the next largest class, numbering 20%, after which come 17% engaged in farming, and small percentages in commerce, transportation, the professions, and housekeeping. Of the 2823 members reporting under the captions of craftsmen and transportation and eligible for membership in labor unions 44% are members of the American Federation of Labor, 5% of the Industrial Workers of the World, 13% of independent unions, and 38% unaffiliated. These statistics are borne out by those of the delegates to the National Convention of 1908, the latter showing, roughly speaking, the quality of the party leaders, as the previous figures that of the rank and file. Of 210 delegates, 151 were Americans; the mean were between the ages of 30 and 40, were craftsmen by occupation and had belonged to the party six years. Sixty-seven delegates, or about one-third of the entire number, were members of labor unions, 61 of these belonging to the American Federation of Labor.¹

Of these two sets of figures, the most interesting indications are, in both cases, the majority of Americans in the Socialist Party, and the predominance of the craftsman. Labor unionists, chiefly members of the American Federation, number about one-third of the party, the percentage being rather

¹ Weekly Bull., July 28, 1908.

larger among the selected delegates than among the members as a whole.

Members are required to pay dues of at least 15 cents a month, of which five cents goes to the national, five to the state, and the remainder to the local organization.¹ Receipts are given in the form of dues stamps, and a member in arrears for more than three months is subject to suspension, unless exempted because of illness or unemployment.² In addition to the regular dues there are frequent calls for voluntary contributions, so that the average member pays an amount about equal to the dues in small sums for campaign funds, expenses of delegates, etc. The party has always published an itemized account of finances, and, according to Eugene V. Debs, no money has ever been received from any corporation.³

"The 'old parties,' says an official publication, 'have no dues-paying system; in fact, they need none, as the corruption funds 'for value received' are ample to support them at all times, especially during campaigns. . . . We must not forget that we are living under the competitive system, and that pending its abolition our movement requires funds for its support from its members; that we must have system for this purpose, and that dependence on 'philanthropists' and 'voluntary subscriptions' alone, tends to demoralize, rather than strengthen the party.'" ⁴

The members are grouped into town or county locals, each containing not less than five members, but persons in districts where there is no local may

¹ By-laws, Local N. Y., Art. 19.

² Nat. Con., Art. 12, Sec. 6.

³ Weekly Bull., July 18, 1908.

⁴ Why Socialists Pay Dues.

join the party as members at large.¹ In large cities the locals are divided into branches by assembly districts, Brooklyn, or Local Kings County, thus having over 25 assembly district branches.² In New York County an arrangement has been made by which the districts are grouped into nine large subdivisions, on the ground that the former is too small a unit for efficiency and leads to unnecessary duplication of machinery. This change is the outcome of much discussion, and, if successful, will doubtless be followed by other locals in the state. Each district branch elects officers corresponding to those of the local, an organizer, secretaries, treasurer, and literature agent, with various standing committees. Throughout the Socialist organization there is no permanent presiding officer, the democratic ideal leading to the election of a temporary chairman for each meeting. Business meetings are held at least once a month, usually every two weeks, and the branch is expected to conduct systematic educational and propaganda work in connection with these. Foreigners unable to speak English are usually grouped into special language branches, and the Local Woman's Committees sometimes conduct special study classes among women, supplementary to the regular district branches. In many places Socialist schools are carried on for the purpose of counteracting the "capitalistic" influence of the public schools and instilling in children the Socialist ideals.³ In New York City these schools are maintained in co-operation with a labor organization, The Workmen's Circle.

¹ N. Y. State Con., Art. 1, Sec. 3, 17.

² By-Laws, Local N. Y., Art. 18.

³ See B. M. Fraser, Outline of Lessons for Soc. Schools.

Under the direction of the county organizer, each branch carries on agitation in its own district, including the distribution of literature, the following up of Socialist sympathizers, and frequently the holding of street meetings. The latter means of agitation, hitherto extensively employed by New York Socialists, has been lately much criticised in the party conferences, and is beginning to be partly superseded by indoor lectures and distribution of literature. The success of the Wisconsin Social Democrats is claimed to be due chiefly to the last-named form of propaganda, and the street meeting is charged with attracting too often merely the idler and the "slum proletarian," who are unsatisfactory material for organization.

The county locals of New York and Brooklyn meet in a body but seldom, and then only for special business, such as the instruction of national delegates. The work of the branches is unified by the organizer of the county, often a salaried worker, and by the Central Committee, in which every branch is represented according to its membership.¹ Each town or county nominates its own candidates for local campaigns and conducts its affairs subordinatedly to the state and national constitutions.

The organization of New York State is conducted by a State Committee elected by the locals, a State Executive Committee consisting of the members of the former residing in the vicinity of New York, and a State Organizer.² It nominates candidates for the state campaign, and, subject to the national constitution, possesses complete control over its own members, including the power of suspension or ex-

— ¹ N. Y. By-Laws, Art. 4.

² State Const., Art. 2, Sec. 1, 4, 6.

pulsion.¹ A State Convention is held in the years of the gubernatorial election, and, on the initiative of three locals in three counties, any question may be submitted to a referendum of the members. The only material restriction on the autonomy of the state is that it is permitted neither to support nor to enter into compromise with any other political party, nor to refrain from making nominations in order to favor an outside candidate, under penalty of severance of connection with the Socialist Party.²

The Socialist Labor Party confers less power upon the state organization than does the Socialist Party, since it gives the local complete freedom in the matter of expulsion of members, and, on the other hand, allows the National Executive Committee to expel or reorganize "any State Executive Committee guilty of disloyalty."³

Nationally the Socialist Party conducts its affairs by means of a National Committee, elected by referendum of the states in proportion to their membership, and consisting at present of 69 persons, a National Executive Committee of seven members elected by party referendum, and a salaried National Secretary, chosen in the same manner.⁴ A Woman's National Committee has recently been formed, with a General Correspondent, who has charge of the propaganda among women.⁵

There are in the United States several national organizations of foreign-born Socialists closely affiliated with the Socialist Party.⁶

¹ State Const., Art. 1, Sec. 9.

² Nat. Const., Art. 12, Sec. 3.

³ Const. of S. L. P., Art. 2, Sec. 11, 12; Art. 3, Sec. 2; Art. 5, Sec. 14 d.

⁴ Nat. Const., Art. 3-7; Referendum E, 1909.

⁵ S. P. Off. Bull., Jan. 1910.

⁶ N. Y. Call, Feb. 8, 1910.

Subject to initiative and referendum, the national committees and secretary circulate literature, support organizers and lecturers, assist in local matters when requested, conduct the national campaigns, and call the National Conventions and Congresses. The latter are composed of delegates from the states elected by the membership, the Convention meeting in the years of presidential elections for the purpose of deciding upon candidates and platforms, and the Congress meeting in the alternate two-year period for general discussion as to tactics.¹

Peculiar provisions of the Socialist Labor Party constitution are that the National Executive Committee is given a certain degree of discretion in submitting referendums, and is allowed somewhat broadly to "compensate its officers from the party treasury according to the labors performed." The party press, moreover, is given unusual privileges and restrictions, as well:

"each Section shall relentlessly insist upon each member being a regular reader of the party organ, except when none such is published in the language read by the member; . . . no member, committee, or Section of the Party shall publish a political paper without the sanction of the National Executive Committee; . . . the National Executive Committee shall have control of the contents of all Party organs, and shall act on grievances connected with the same." ²

Each of the American Socialist parties elects a secretary to the International Socialist Bureau, and

¹ Nat. Const., Art. 10.

² Const. S. L. P., Art. 5, Sec. 14 h, 15; Art. 9, 10; Art. 2, Sec. 20, 21.

sends delegates to the International Congresses held in Europe every few years. As has before been mentioned, however, the Socialist Party claimed in 1909 the right to the second secretary, hitherto elected by the Socialist Labor Party, on the ground of its large numerical superiority.¹ It accordingly sent Mr. Berger to fill this second place. While the International organization refused to unseat Mr. De Leon of the Socialist Labor Party, it gave a complimentary "advisory" seat to Mr. Berger, thus tacitly acknowledging the claim of the rival party. Moreover, as the parliamentary representatives of each country have the right to elect a special representative of their own to the Bureau, Berger, by his election to the United States Congress, became by that fact a member with full rights. Accordingly, the Socialist Party has now two members in the International Bureau, Morris Hillquit, its official representative, and Victor Berger, the parliamentary representative.

The three most striking points as to the Socialist Party organization just outlined are, — its close discipline, its extreme democracy, and its intimate connection with Socialism abroad.

Through the International Bureau and Congresses the American and European Socialists are kept in touch as to theory and tactics. They exchange bulletins as to conditions of labor, discuss questions of such mutual importance as immigration and disarmament, and maintain a spirit of solidarity shown by such facts as the contribution of 10,000 marks by the German Socialist party to the *New York Call*, and the forwarding by the American National Sec-

¹ S. P. Off. Bulletin, July, 1909.

retary of over \$6000 to the Swedish general strike of 1909.¹ It is believed by Socialists that the International organization has already become a factor in the peace of the world; and Kautsky views with alarm the "jingoistic" tendencies of the English "Clarion" Socialists as likely to endanger the peace of England and Germany through its effect on the international Socialist movement.

In the Socialist Party unlimited power is given to the rank and file by the use of the initiative, referendum, and recall. The democratic spirit thus signified is carried into every detail of the organization to such an extent that many Socialists are now realizing that a degree of efficiency is thereby sacrificed. Not only is the chairman elected anew at each meeting, but the inexperienced and incapable is called upon to take his turn at presiding; not only is free speech maintained, but the loquacious orator is suffered indefinitely before the gavel falls; and in the zeal for local autonomy committees are multiplied in every branch until service upon them signifies but little. Owing to a recent decision to hold party referendums open indefinitely for the requisite endorsements, the referendum has become so frequent as to lose much of its value as an expression of deliberate opinion.² A still more typical instance of the ultra-democratic spirit is shown in the party vote shortening the term of office in the National Executive Committee from two years to one, and prohibiting the election of any person for two consecutive terms.

¹ N. Y. Call, Jan. 2, 1910; Report of the National Secretary, 1910, p. 11.

² S. P. Official Bulletin, Jan., 1910.

The *Call* makes the charge:

"We have allowed the fetish of false democracy to paralyze our organizations. There is not a local organization in America that does not habitually waste two or three hours debating detail and routine business that an efficient committee of three could dispose of in ten minutes." ¹

The discipline of the Socialist parties is peculiar in that, unlike the older parties, they have in general no emoluments to offer and no privileges to grant, and even where they possess these, are forbidden by their own principles to make use of them. Victor Berger tells us that during his experience in the city government of Milwaukee he has only once asked for a "job" for a faithful party member; the favor was granted, but refused by the beneficiary on the ground that it might subject the party and himself to unjust criticism.

The only weapons of the Socialist organizations are censure and expulsion, and, although these convey no material penalty, they are used drastically to keep the parties free from undesired elements. From October, 1906, to December, 1908, at least 19 expulsions were reported in the *Weekly Bulletin* of the Socialist Party National Committee, the greater number of these being penalties for the support of candidates of other political parties. The decision of the state is final in these matters, and in at least two cases, those of Seattle and St. Louis, a whole city local has been expelled without consultation with the national organization.²

¹ N. Y. *Call*, Nov. 14, 1909.

² *Weekly Bulletin*, July 21, 1907; S. P. Off. *Bulletin*, Feb., 1911.

In the Socialist Labor Party, the local section possesses ultimate power over the individual members, and the National Executive over the Sections, with the result that this party has at times inaugurated a somewhat vigorous regime of "purification" against insurgent elements.¹

As the required creed of the Socialist Party consists only of the class struggle and political action, and as belief in these is usually the motive for joining the organization, there is little room for discipline on points of doctrine. The imperative requirement of "No Compromise" is practically the only ground for prosecution, but this has been sufficient to figure in many local disputes.

The appropriate function of Socialist discipline is the treatment of such cases as those of Briand and Millerand in France, who violated the party tactics in accepting office under non-Socialist ministries.² A recent American instance illustrates the discipline on a small scale. A Socialist of Lead, South Dakota, who had been elected to the office of alderman, violated the principle of working-class solidarity in consenting to act as strike-breaker. When the Socialist Party expelled him, presenting to the city council the resignation which, according to Socialist custom, he had filed before his election, the culprit remained loyal to the recall, and refused to remain in the council even after it had declined to accept his resignation.³

There are three avenues of political power open to a third party such as that of the Socialists. The

¹ Hillquit, *Hist. of Soc.*, p. 325.

² See Charles Rappoport, *Die Neue Zeit*, quoted in *N. Y. Call*, March 10, 1910.

³ *Call*, March 8, 1910 (Hunter); *S. P. Off. Bull.*, Feb., 1910.

first of these, the method of temporary fusion with other radical parties, was followed in the early days of the Socialist Labor Party at such times as it employed the franchise at all. The last experiment in this line, however, that of the New York fusion with the United Labor Party in 1886, proved so unsatisfactory that since that time the American Socialists have maintained an unconditional hostility toward political compromise.

The second mode of exercising power is that which has been forced upon the German Social Democrats by the peculiar conditions of their government. While they constitute numerically the largest party in the Empire, they are able in general to influence government action only indirectly, by protesting against the evils that exist and extorting favorable legislation from other parties by the display of their menacing power. It is well-known that Bismarck frankly fought Socialism with socialistic measures, and the German Socialists maintain that it is the threat of their growing political body which has brought about the advanced labor legislation of recent years.¹ Ever since the practice of fusion was repudiated by the American party, this policy of power through menace has been prominent. Owing to its insignificant numbers until recently, the party has existed as little more than an organization of protest, but the growth of this protest has, according to its advocates, been of some effect in forcing radical measures into the platforms of the older parties.

During this period "No Compromise" has marked the attitude of American Socialists. The members and local organizations are prohibited from

¹ Soc. Campaign Book, 1908, Hunter, p. 113, ff.; Debs, p. 6.

voting for or aiding in the election of any candidate of another party, from refraining to nominate in order to favor other candidates, from accepting appointive offices from other parties, and from even temporary fusion.¹

The sentiment of the rank and file is expressed by the following:

“Everything and everybody connected with the democratic party is an enemy of Socialism, and therefore a political enemy of every Socialist. For a Socialist to take part in the affairs of the democratic or republican party is nothing less than treason. Every person who becomes a member of a Socialist party local signs a pledge to the effect that he severs all relations with all other parties and henceforth will support the Socialist party, and the Socialist party alone. The only way for a party member to relieve himself from the obligation of this pledge is to withdraw from the party; but if he violates the pledge while retaining membership, it becomes the duty of the local to expel him. . . . Remember the Socialist slogan: ‘No compromise, no political trading.’ ”²

It is of interest to note that, while the pledge of the Socialist Party is not a promise for the future, but a declaration of present independence of other political parties, the Socialist Labor Party exacts a promise that the candidate “will never” cast a ballot elsewhere.³ As has already been mentioned, the penalty of expulsion is in both parties freely

¹ S. P. Nat. Const., Art. xii. Sec. 3.

² Appeal to Reason, Mar. 3, 1907.

³ Prin. of S. L. P.; Const. of S. L. P., Art. 2, Sec. 5.

applied to all violations of the No Compromise principle.

During the stage in which the policy of protest is dominant, there are few points at which parliamentary tactics may be said to appear, and questions of procedure arise chiefly with regard to the internal organization and principles as previously outlined. There is a third means of power, however, which must eventually be reached by any successful Socialist party, — the method of direct participation in the government. In most European countries, and especially in Germany, the Socialists have for years engaged in parliamentary activity, and in France they have secured actual control of several municipalities. While in general the rigid prohibition of compromise has remained characteristic of Socialism, it has been unavoidable that, in this development of parliamentary and executive action, a gradual shifting of opinion has taken place as to what constitutes compromise.

In the early days of the German movement, the wisdom of even entering Parliament was questioned, and participation in any parliamentary activity beyond that of protest was considered compromise. Until the late nineties it was deemed compromise to use the franchise at all under the iniquitous electoral systems of various German states.¹ To vote in favor of the imperialistic budget is still accounted compromise, and the vice-presidency of the Reichstag is unclaimed by the Socialists because of the perfunctory duties attached thereto which would involve a sanction of the present government.²

¹ Skelton, *op. cit.* p. 234.

² Kampffmeyer, *op. cit.* p. 37-78.

In spite of their general attitude of protest, however, the German Socialists have long made use of parliamentary methods in securing legislation for the benefit of the working class.¹ The International Congress at Paris in 1900 declared that under certain circumstances the experiment of the entry of a Socialist representative into a bourgeois ministry might be allowed "as a temporary and exceptional makeshift," only, however, when approved by the whole party organization.² Even W. E. Walling, a "revolutionist" in the American party, admits the possible advantage of compromise when great and immediate benefit to the workers may be obtained thereby.³

Perhaps the clearest statement that can be found of the present definition of compromise among Marxians is that of Kautsky:

"What is opposed is the idea of the possibility that a proletarian party can during normal times regularly combine with a capitalist party for the purpose of maintaining a government or a government party, without being destroyed by the insuperable conflicts which must exist."⁴

The following instructions given to the national organizers of the American Socialist Party show a definite application of the principle:

"Show the necessity for avoiding alliances or fusions, direct or indirect, through individuals, locals, or states, with any other political organization."⁵

¹ Liebknecht, *No Compromise*, p. 31, 52.

² See *ibid.* p. 58. Chas. Rappoport in *N. Y. Call*, March 10, 1910.

³ *N. Y. Call*, Nov. 7, 1909.

⁴ *Road to Power*, p. 11.

⁵ *Weekly Bulletin*, June 11, 1908.

The only extensive opportunity for parliamentarism among American Socialists exists in the Wisconsin legislature and the Milwaukee city government, and, while factions opposed to "the Wisconsin movement" have always been ready to accuse the Socialists in that state of fusion and other violations of the party constitution, such charges have been emphatically denied, and never substantiated.¹ The rigid position in which the Wisconsin Socialists are held by the national constitution may be regarded as a source either of strength or of weakness. On the one hand, the Socialists are forced into an attitude of opposition to the reform forces led by Senator La Follette, with many of whose principles they are in hearty agreement, and united with whom they might exert appreciable influence upon national politics. On the other hand, their very rigidity has saved them from absorption in the fluctuating fortunes of the radicals, and has doubtless been an important factor in raising them so far above suspicion of collusion that the city of Milwaukee surrendered itself to their untried power rather than to either of the corrupted older parties.

It is evident, however, that as soon as the Socialists in each country pass from the condition of a cult to that of a party, the matter of compromise tends to be interpreted more and more liberally. Though the Wisconsin legislators may adhere strictly to the terms of the same national constitution that governs the New York party of protest, the former are gaining a practical experience in methods which to the New York Marxist are a synonym for compromise and opportunism. The Socialist administra-

¹ Weekly Bulletin, June 18, 1907.

tion of Milwaukee had hardly entered upon its duties before it became the object of sharp criticism from the party "revolutionists"; and the degree of success with which this administration is attended will undoubtedly exercise great influence upon the idea of "compromise" as held in the American party.¹

Although its limited scope and its subordination to state regulations preclude the Milwaukee government from being considered a type of Socialism, yet the working out of its problems cannot fail to furnish a valuable experiment in Socialist administration. While the success was won with the aid of non-Socialist elements, the issue of Socialism was in no sense obscured, and the city government entered upon its duties with no entangling associations other than the characteristically Socialist alliance with organized labor. It has unconditionally repudiated the spoils system, but differs from reform parties in its open partisanship. Whether or not it will be able to combine honesty and efficiency with the principles of championship of the working class and subordination to the rigid national constitution of revolutionary Socialism is a question fraught with great consequence for the movement.²

In the controversy as to compromise, it is unavoidable that the authority of Marxism should be used by both sides. Those who differ from the parliamentarians point to the inconsistency of their methods with the doctrine of class struggle, asking,—

"What is the difference between the concord that is now proposed with the reformers on the question of workingmen's insurance, etc., on the political field,

¹ See Rose Pastor Stokes, N. Y. Call, May 14, 1910.

² See Seidel's Inaug. Speech, Social Dem. Herald, Apr. 23, 1910.

and the concord that is already carried out by the Civic Federation on the economic field?"¹

They quote the typical Marxist, Wilhelm Liebknecht, in his denunciation of compromise and political trading.²

The Wisconsin legislators and their sympathizers, on the other hand, draw attention to the recommendation of the *Communist Manifesto* for the Communists to support the radical parties in their respective countries,³ and to the opportunistic character of Marx's organization, the International.

"It was Marx," says Spargo, "who arranged that the trades unions of Great Britain should coöperate with such bitter enemies of ordinary trades union policies as Bright and Cobden in rousing the public opinion of Great Britain to the support of President Lincoln and the Union cause. . . . It was Marx, too, who, in the same way, brought about the coöperation of all the radical forces in the struggle for franchise reform a few years later."⁴

The American constructivists note also the gradual change of tactics on the part of the German successors of Marx, and look to the German Social-Democracy as their guide in matters of practice.⁵

In direct contrast to the Wisconsin Socialists must be placed the advocates of "revolutionism" and of "direct action" previously mentioned, in whose opinion, quoting Mr. Walling once more,

¹ Walling, in Call, Mar. 22, 1910.

² No. Comp., p. 17, *seq.*

³ Hillquit, *History of Socialism*, p. 178; *Communist Manifesto*, p. 45; J. Keir Hardie, in N. Y. Call, Feb. 20, 1908.

⁴ Spargo, *Sidelights, etc.*, p. 144.

⁵ Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 6; Gaylord, preface to translation of Kampffmeyer, *op. cit.*, p. 5.

“these petty reforms never have and never will arouse the enthusiasm of the working class and *do not even permit of its coöperation, but leave everything in the hands of a few self-appointed leaders.*”¹

The varying shades of Socialist opinion regarding the fall of the capitalist system are closely associated with the corresponding shades of tactical difference. To the revolutionist, looking for an automatic socialization of capital, an improvement of labor conditions through industrial unionism, and a final decisive struggle for proletarian victory, the slow winning of votes and passing of bills appear trivial, and the slightest halt of the revolutionary column is considered compromise. The constructivist, on the contrary, believes that, since the path to Socialism must be won step by step through conscious political action, every vote that adds to the power of the working class and every bill that tends to improve their condition is not only an immediate advantage but an advance, even though slight, in the direction of the Socialist commonwealth. The contrast between these two groups, representing the extremes of Socialist tactics, brings us to the consideration of the divisions in the American movement.

¹ N. Y. Call, Mar. 22, 1910.

CHAPTER XIV

THE DIVISIONS AMONG AMERICAN SOCIALISTS

IF we exclude the various types of non-party sympathizers that cluster about the American Socialist parties, we find that such lines of cleavage as exist are seldom sufficiently distinct to warrant the division of American Socialists into several "varieties." The Socialist Labor Party, to be sure, is an organization separate from and antagonistic to the Socialist Party, but the differences are largely personal, and the policy of the former can be distinguished but slightly from that of the "revolutionary" wing of the latter.

The Socialist Party is divided neither into two opposing camps nor into a number of warring factions, as is shown by the unanimity with which all groups coöperate in such enterprises as the party press, a contest for free speech, or a labor conflict.¹ There is, rather, a gradual shading from the revolutionists on the left to the constructivists on the right, through groups whose characteristics are seldom exact and always changing, but whose members indulge in frequent and vigorous mutual criticism. Sometimes following the tactical differences and sometimes running counter to them are divisions as

¹ See list of The Call Weekly Pledge Fund, N. Y. Call, Mar. 23, 1910.

to doctrine, social class, attitude toward religion, and policy as to the organization of labor.

Most fundamental, but of slight practical importance, is the distinction formerly alluded to between the Marxist and the Revisionist. It is true that, in the broad meaning of the term, Revisionist is practically synonymous with constructivist; there is a convenient and limited sense, however, in which "Revisionist" is applied to those Socialists who demand a revision of Marx's theories as inconsistent with modern economic science and the facts of industrial development. While in Europe there have been serious controversies between such opponents as Bernstein and Kautsky, America has produced so far no Revisionists in the sense of independent revisers of the Marxian theories.¹ Revisionist conclusions have been adopted to a limited extent by Spargo and the younger writers, but we see in this country few of the constructivists bestowing attention upon revisionist theories as such. The extreme right are characterized by either ignoring the Marxian theories or amplifying them by an application to modern society, as in the works of Hillquit, Spargo, and Ghent.² The American movement contains, on the other hand, strong Marxian apologists, among whom are Sanial, Untermann, Boudin, and La Monte. Mr. Boudin attacks with vigor the disregard of theory in the American movement, maintaining that, while

"Our intelligent opponents are studying the Socialist classics with avidity, . . . it seems to have been left

¹ Kautsky, *Road to Power*, p. 34-35; Bernstein und das Soc. Prog., p. 1, *seq.*

² Spargo, *Socialism*, p. 102.

to the Socialist Party of America to go our former ignorant opponents one better by teaching Socialism without taking the trouble of studying and understanding it."

The strict Marxists are usually revolutionists of one type or another, claiming that the consistent application of the principles of the class struggle, the materialistic conception of history, and the catastrophe of capitalism, leads only to the revolutionary position.

The attitude of the opposite wing is shown by Victor Berger of Wisconsin, and by Senator Gaylord of the same state, who writes:

"Judging Marx by what happened during his life, I have a strong suspicion that he might have changed his mind a little by this time. . . . Moreover, the practical problem of the social ownership and control of social utilities will not depend for its solution upon whether or not some debatable points in a certain book can be substantiated."

The Christian Socialists are not a faction, and do not embrace any different variety of Socialism from that of the party at large.¹ We have seen, however, that there exists a strong tendency towards atheism in the ranks of the Socialists, which is fostered by an exaggerated interpretation of economic determinism and by the known opposition to the church on the part of the early Marxians. The revolutionist spirit, also, frequently finds itself opposed to the Christian Socialists in their desire to base the movement upon the brotherhood of man rather than the interest of a class. Thus we see the

¹ The Christian Socialist, June 15, 1907. .

Christian Socialists often identified with the constructivists and Revisionists, this connection being emphasized by their opponents. Such an antagonism appeared in Nebraska in 1907, when the Christian Socialist faction in that state was supported by Carl Thompson of Wisconsin, who was in turn attacked by the "revolutionists" of Washington.¹ It is rare at present, however, that a Socialist writer declares, with A. M. Lewis, that Christianity is incompatible with economic materialism, and Spargo and Work are emphatic in declaring the essential idealism of the Socialist philosophy.²

The alignment of Socialists as to social classes is most elusive, and has been greatly exaggerated. On the one hand are the proletarians, properly including all non-capitalist workers, but often interpreted as merely the skilled and unskilled manual laborers; on the other are the "parlor Socialist," or convert from the bourgeois class, and the "intellectual," or educated mental worker. The evidence for the supposed antagonism between the two is derived from such controversies as the one previously referred to between the *New York Call* and W. J. Ghent, and from such referendums as those recently submitted to the party directing that the occupation of every candidate for the National Executive Committee be printed on the ballot and debarring any editor or publisher of a newspaper from occupying a national office.³ While the former referendum was passed and now belongs to the procedure of the Socialist Party, the latter was defeated by a large majority,

¹ Weekly Bulletin, Aug. 22, 1907; Oct. 10, 1907; July 28, 1908.

² Lewis, *Evolution and Social Science*, p. 4; Work, p. 83; Spargo, *Spiritual Significance of Socialism*, p. 18, 91.

³ S. P. Official Bulletin, Oct., 1909.

showing that the working-class rank and file are in reality influenced but little by the anti-intellectual movement.¹ The laborer takes no part in the dispute, says a correspondent of the *Call*,

“being defended as usual by sympathetic comrades from their offices and studios. . . . So far as I can learn, he takes no interest whatever in the discussion, but is found plodding along doing his work as he sees it, and, strangest of all, wherever there is work to be done requiring brains, he immediately puts a comrade on the job having the required qualifications.”²

As antagonistic factions in the Socialist Party the two divisions do not exist; any classification along lines of policy always includes both intellectual and manual workers, members of the proletarian and middle classes. It is generally true, however, that, other things being equal, advantages in education and opportunity tend to liberality rather than to extremism, and that the cultured members of the Socialist Party, removed as they are from conditions of oppression, are prone to look with greater toleration upon Revisionism and the slow policies of reform than does the laborer on the firing line of the industrial struggle. The Christian Socialists, too, are naturally drawn to a large extent from the congregations of the more liberal Protestant churches, representing the educated native middle class, rather than from the working classes to whom religion and radicalism come, as a rule, in forms opposed to one another.

¹ S. P. Official Bulletin, Feb., 1909.

² N. Y. Call, Dec. 16, 1909.

We accordingly find Ernest Untermann, although an "intellectual," proclaiming himself a proletarian and a non-Christian with the implication that the two are synonymous; and the Washington committeeman Herman identifies proletarianism with revolution in the question, "Shall we have a revolutionary proletarian party or a reform bourgeois party in Nebraska?"¹

While the controversy that recently threatened serious dissension in the Socialist Party centers chiefly around the question of labor organization, it has not been unconnected with the "proletarian-intellectual" discussion. Owing to the fact that the members of the 1909 National Executive Committee, representing in general one side of the labor controversy, were nearly all mental workers, the opposition has demanded emphatically the representation of manual laborers on this committee. Although this demand has met with general acceptance by the party, including the members of the committee in question, it has been the occasion of somewhat bitter dispute, giving rise to the referendum previously mentioned which aimed to exclude editors and publishers of newspapers from national office.²

Since modesty usually forbids a man's confessing himself an "intellectual," and since the genuine manual laborer is seldom able to express himself by means of the press and the lecture platform, we have among American Socialists the rather absurd spectacle of certain writers and lecturers more or less educated dubbing one another "intellectuals,"

¹ Weekly Bulletin, Nov. 2, 1907; July 28, 1909.

² See Simons' letter, in Int. Soc. Rev., Jan., 1910, p. 594, *seq.*, and Call Editorial, Nov. 7, 1909.

and either hurling back the epithet or risking the still more unpleasant designation of "self-styled intellectual."

Anti-intellectualism, however, is not peculiar to the American party, but, as Spargo has pointed out, has appeared in every country in the formative stage of the Socialist movement, furnishing the basis more than once for bitter opposition to the leaders Marx and Engels. The most active and prominent of the anti-intellectualists, says Spargo, can practically without exception

"be included in one of two classes. Almost to a man, they were either empty-headed Utopians, men with schemes for the speedy salvation of mankind, such as 'free credit,' universal languages, and the like, or they were men whose overwhelming desire for personal gain or power led them into the lowest depths of treachery and deceit."¹

Spargo represents the sentiment of the majority of American Socialists, both working and middle class, in the following:

"Any attempt to limit the influence and work of any number of honest and sincere Socialists, simply because they are not manual laborers, must of necessity be mischievous and injurious to the movement. This is a working-class movement primarily, and no conspiracy can change that essential characteristic. But to attempt to exclude from active participation in it all who are not manual laborers is either the counsel of fools or of traitors. If such an attempt were to succeed it would doom the movement to defeat. A working-class movement which

¹ Spargo, *Sidelights*, etc., p. 102-103.

deliberately refused to avail itself of all the gifts of intellect and education at its command, would be doomed to pursue forever the futile task of plowing sand.”¹

While differences as to Marxian doctrine, religion, and social class must exist in the Socialism of every country, the problem of labor organization as it now confronts American Socialists is distinctive. An account has already been given of the general support given to all labor unions, of the hostility of the American Federation of Labor to the Socialist parties, and of the alliance of the former through its leaders with the American Civic Federation. Allusion was made to the Socialist labor unions in the West and to the rise and decadence of the Industrial Workers of the World. It is coming to be believed by many Socialists that the old craft organizations, uniting as they do members of the same craft in various industries, tend toward the formation of labor aristocracies, encourage jurisdictional disputes, and hinder such mass action as is required in large strikes. Division into crafts, moreover, being based largely on differences in tools, is inapplicable to the modern industry in which tools, in the strict sense of the word, are not used. The industrial union, on the other hand, by which all the trades or crafts in an industry are united, gives great tactical advantages. Instead of relying upon a full treasury and the ability to stand a protracted strike, it places its dependence on the strike that is short but widespread, thus working toward the Socialist ideal of labor solidarity. This type of organization is usually

¹ Spargo, *Sidelights*, etc., p. 105-106.

associated with declared Socialist principles, with refusal to enter into contracts or alliances with employers, and with a generally militant attitude. The preamble of the Industrial Workers of the World tells the laborer:

“ Instead of the conservative motto, ‘ A fair day’s wages for a fair day’s work,’ we must inscribe on our banner the revolutionary watchword, ‘ Abolition of the wage system.’ ”¹

The American Federation is based on the trade or craft organization, and, while the industrial form appears at times, as in the United Mine Workers, there is an absence of the militant Socialist features which Wm. Haywood, of the Western Federation of Miners, terms essential to industrialism. While Ben Hanford was an upholder of craft unionism and the American Federation, Eugene V. Debs has always fought for the industrial organization, and is followed in this advocacy by most of the younger Socialists. While a local here and there, however, sometimes tries to pass a national resolution declaring for industrial unionism, the bulk of the Socialist Party have decided to remain neutral in the matter, supporting all labor unions without interference with their internal organization, and continuing to spread propaganda among them as the natural recruiting-ground for Socialism. The party has expressed its official attitude as follows:

“ The Socialist Party does not seek to dictate to organized labor in matters of internal organization and union policy. It recognizes the necessary autonomy of the union movement on the economic

¹ Int. Soc. Rev. Advertising Pages, Feb., 1910.

field, as it insists on maintaining its own autonomy on the political field. It is confident that in the school of experience organized labor will as rapidly as possible develop the most effective forms of organization and methods of action. The Socialist Party stands with organized labor in all its struggles to resist capitalist aggression or to wrest from the capitalists any improvement in the conditions of labor.”¹

“We do not ask any trade union to endorse the Socialist Party. Party politics is not within the scope of the trade union. On the other hand, we must make the trade unionist constantly feel that the Socialist Party is the political complement — the other half — of the economic organization.”²

Although the matter of labor organization appears at first sight outside the field of Socialist discussion, upon it depends an important question of American tactics, — namely, the attitude of the Socialist Party toward the formation of a Labor Party on the lines of that in England.

The situation is thus outlined by Karl Kautsky:

“One can distinguish two principal types of movements for the attainment of an all-embracing Socialist class party: the European continental type, which is best illustrated at present in the German Social-Democracy, and the Anglo-Saxon type, which can best be studied in England, but which is also strikingly developed in North America and in Australia. . . . In continental Europe the political organization of the proletariat developed before their

¹ Address to Organized Labor of National Convention, S. P. Official Bulletin, Jan., 1910.

² Address of National Executive Committee, Bulletin, Jan., 1910.

trade union organization; they have, therefore, the sooner formed a mass party under the Socialist flag.”¹

In England, however, the trade unions were the first to develop,

“and a separate political party seemed quite superfluous, since no obstacle hindered their political activity in England. Under these conditions it was only possible to form a separate working class party by amalgamating the trade unions into a common political organization and to permeate it with the Socialist spirit.

“This was also the opinion of Karl Marx, who was so influenced by the English conditions that he propagated a similar development in continental Europe.”¹

Kautsky goes on to explain that the Marxist Social Democratic Party of England need not consider the Labor Party as a rival, but should, on the contrary, enter into affiliation with it.

He finally applies the case to the American Socialists as follows:

“In North America things are somewhat different from those obtaining in England. Still, there is some similarity, and it is possible that there, too, the long wished for mass party of the proletariat may be formed into an independent political party in the very near future by the constitution of the American Federation of Labor. Probably this new party will not be a definitely Socialist one at first, and the Socialist Party will, therefore, have to exist side by

¹ N. Y. Call, Mar. 6, 1910.

side with it until the trade union party has been fully won for Social Democracy. As in England, so in the United States. The chief sphere of the Labor party will be parliamentary and electoral, while that of the Social Democracy will be theoretical and propagandist.

"Attempts have been made in this direction, and we must be prepared one fine day to see the rise of such a Labor party side by side with the Socialist Party in the United States, and demanding admission to the International.

"And here I am of the opinion that what holds for the British will also hold for the American Labor party. . . .

"The ideal organization is the unification of all proletarian parties, the political societies, the trade unions, the coöperatives, as equal members, not of a labor party without a program, as is at present the case in England, but of a class-conscious, all-embracing Social Democracy." ¹

The German leader is doubtless rather too ready to parallel the English and American conditions, making too little allowance for the peculiar position of the American Federation of Labor. As long as this body remains affiliated, through seven out of the eleven members of its Executive Council, with the Civic Federation, the Socialist Party is not likely to overcome its long-standing suspicion.² An official utterance voices this feeling:

"With the growing strength of the Socialist Party endangering the battlements of capitalism an oppo-

¹ N. Y. Call, Mar. 6, 1910.

² S. P. Off. Bull., Jan., 1910, p. 3.

sition and conservative labor party will be required by the Civic Federation and the interests it serves. When it is needed it will also be financed.”¹

There is a considerable Socialist element in the American Federation, on the other hand, and a generally radical tendency is shown in an important section, the United Mine Workers, in its recent hostile action toward the National Civic Federation. Certain members of the Socialist Party, notably A. M. Simons and Robert Hunter of the National Executive Committee, were in the fall of 1909 apparently preparing for a campaign to bring the more radical wing of the Federation into closer connection with the Socialists.¹ A letter on this subject written by Mr. Simons to Mr. William English Walling, a revolutionary “intellectual” Socialist not at the time a member of the party, was published by the latter and characterized as an attempt to form a Labor Party on the English model.² Not only Mr. Simons, but four other members of the National Executive Committee, Robert Hunter, Morris Hillquit, John Spargo, and Victor Berger, were charged with this project, and for several months the Socialist press and lecture platform rang with denunciations of the proposed Labor Party on the one hand and denials of the existence of such a proposition on the other.

The *International Socialist Review*, at present the organ of the revolutionary Socialists, published in the midst of the dispute a series of letters in answer to the query,

¹ S. P. Off. Bulletin, Jan., 1910, p. 3.

² Int. Soc. Rev., Jan., 1910, p. 594, *seq.*

"If elected to the National Executive Committee, will you favor or oppose merging the Socialist Party into a Labor Party?"

The answers are of interest as showing how nearly the cleavage on the lines of the proposed party coincides with that between the constructivists and the revolutionists, to be mentioned later in more detail.

Among those unconditionally hostile to a Labor Party is Eugene V. Debs, who writes,

"The Socialist Party has already catered far too much to the American Federation of Labor and there is no doubt that a halt will have to be called. . . . If the trimmers had their way, we should degenerate into mere bourgeois reform."¹

The Wisconsin Socialists, Berger and Thompson, urge general coöperation between the labor unions and the Socialist Party; J. M. Work states as the mission of the Socialist Party the guidance of any future Labor Party into Socialist channels; and Hillquit, Hunter, and Spargo, while expressing various degrees of doubt regarding the possibility of such a party, agree that the question of Socialist coöperation with it could be decided only after careful consideration of its aims and methods.²

Although the controversy brought forth some bitter personalities and seemed to threaten the disruption of the Socialist Party, it came, at least temporarily, to a peaceful outcome, in the election of the National Executive Committee for 1910, by which the so-called "labor-party" majority in the committee of seven was reduced so as to consist of but

¹ Int. Soc. Rev., Jan., 1910, p. 596, *seq.*

² Ibid.

four, three members who had emphatically declared against such a party, Carey, Goebel, and Lena Morrow Lewis, being seated with them.

The protracted discussion has made clear several points. First, no labor party project is yet in sight. A Union Labor Party indeed has existed for some time in California, but makes no promise of more than state-wide activity, and has so far displayed no leanings toward Socialist affiliation. It is impossible to judge at present what will be the outcome of the prevailing tendency toward political activity on the part of the unions. Second, the moderates of the Socialist Party, including the committee members before mentioned, are prepared to give such a possible party a reception according to its merits. Third, those who tend to the revolutionary position as represented by the *International Socialist Review* are definitely hostile to such a party, on the grounds that the American Federation is impossible as an ally, that political coöperation should be attempted only with those industrial unions that are based on the declared class struggle, and that the English Labor Party is unfit as a model for efficiency. These Socialists, representing the active minority, follow the English Social Democrats in maintaining that the Labor Party is a compromise unworthy of Socialism; and the leaders of the two English bodies themselves have been drawn into the dispute. J. Keir Hardie and J. Ramsay MacDonald on the one side and H. M. Hyndman on the other have contributed to the American Socialist press mutually antagonistic articles, which illustrate very definitely the international character of Socialist tactics.¹

¹ N. Y. Call, Dec. 29, 1909, Jan. 18, 1910, Feb. 13 and 20, 1910.

The one difference of opinion among American Socialists that is of permanent significance is that regarding methods, the main points of which have been indicated in the two preceding chapters; and it is only in so far as they tend to group themselves according to the tactical lines of cleavage that the minor divisions just noted are worthy of attention.

Throughout these pages there have been frequent references to the groups at the opposite poles of American Socialism as "revolutionists" and "constructivists." The writer is fully conscious of both the inadequacy of the terms and the imperfection of such classifications as are here attempted; names are a necessity for thought, however, and among the current designations these appear on the whole to be most satisfactory. Briefly, the revolutionist is the Socialist who, anticipating the fall of capitalism by a sudden and decisive revolution, would leave economic reforms to the labor unions and devote the energies of the party solely to the conquest of political rights and the organization of the proletariat against the day of conflict. The constructivist is the Socialist who, believing that the Socialist commonwealth will be ushered in gradually by deliberate action, advocates that the party direct its immediate efforts, wherever practicable, to the winning of electoral victories, with a view to the construction of positive steps to the commonwealth through legislative measures.¹ As exponents of either view in its extreme form are rare, a more inclusive classification of American Socialists is into the groups of left and right.

At the right, frequently, though by no means uni-

¹ Thompson in *Int. Soc. Rev.*, July, 1905.

versally, associated with a refusal to emphasize dogma and a tolerance of Revisionism, with a welcome to the Christian Socialist and the "intellectual," with friendliness to the English Labor Party and non-interference with methods of union organization, are the constructivists, reformists, or moderates, termed by their enemies the opportunists. These are represented most conspicuously by the Wisconsin Socialists Berger, Thompson, and Gaylord; but for several years the majority of the National Executive Committee, including Hillquit, Hunter, Spargo, Simons, and Work, has tended to constructivism, indicating a prevailing national sentiment in that direction. While this majority was diminished in the recent election, the fact that the well-known moderates, Hunter, Berger, Hillquit, and Spargo, continued to receive the highest preferential vote seems to point to the influence of such special questions as industrialism and "proletarianism," rather than that of general tactics, in determining the decrease. In general, therefore, the present policy of the national Socialist Party may be said to lean toward constructivism, an attitude which has been sufficiently described in the preceding pages. It follows in general the policies of the German Marxists led by Kautsky, placing the chief emphasis upon political activity, making much of immediate measures of amelioration, and working through parliamentary channels for the passage of these measures whenever this can be done without actual compromise.¹

Beyond the party lines the constructivists shade

¹ Kautsky, *Road to Power*, p. 61, 125; Thompson in *Int. Soc. Rev.*, July, 1905; Cohen in the same, August, 1908.

into the opportunists or Fabians, Socialists such as Mrs. Charlotte Perkins Gilman and Mr. John Martin, who aim to bring about the coöperative commonwealth by the aid of the older political parties, without invoking the class struggle.

On the left, with many intermediate gradations, we have the revolutionists, designated by those opposed to them as "impossibilists," consisting to a great extent of Marxists of the old school, but partly of non-theoretical insurgents whose Socialism bears the stamp of the French syndicalists. According to Sombart, the last-named influence is not that of Marxian Socialism in that the economic tendencies of concentration and inevitability proclaimed by Engels are not accepted by syndicalism.¹ The Marxist apologists, among whom may be counted Boudin, Untermann, La Monte, and Slobodin, are especially numerous in the vicinity of New York, where they include prominent Socialists who were once members of the Socialist Labor Party. The revolutionists are usually contemptuous of Christian Socialism, and, while led largely by "intellectuals," contain within their number most of the "ultra-proletarians."

Perhaps the most extreme form of proletarian and anti-religious revolutionism exists across the Canadian border in British Columbia, where the Socialists have declined representation in the International Socialist Bureau on the ground of the admission to that body of the British Labor Party. Their organ, the *Western Clarion*, occupies the extremist position at every point, and their attitude toward reform is illustrated by the following passage:

¹ Sombart, op. cit. p. 104.

"We have every cause to congratulate ourselves over the results which our clear-cut, uncompromising revolutionary program is producing. Reformists are few and far between, and are principally to be found outside the party, a position which they occupy either from choice or discretion, mostly discretion, as we have less 'use' for them than for capitalism, which is saying much, and that strongly."¹

The Socialists of the "left" are for the most part aggressive advocates of industrial unionism, and uncompromising enemies of the American Federation of Labor. Their tactics maintain the rigid "No Compromise" attitude that is opposed to all parliamentarism, advocating that immediate demands be struck out of the national platform, that legislative minorities pursue the tactics of opposition only, and that constant emphasis be placed in propaganda upon the class war. They antagonize all attempts to secure the support of the middle classes by toning down revolutionary issues, and place their reliance less in the gaining of political power than in the arousing of the working class to the general strike and other forms of "direct action." The strength of this minority is illustrated by the fact that while, in the balloting for delegates to the International Congress of 1910, Victor Berger stood first, William Haywood, a well-known revolutionist, was a close second. After the *International Socialist Review*, moreover, embraced the revolutionist tactics, it claims to have increased its circulation in two years from 2000 to 40,000.

While the revolutionists pass, on the one side,

¹ The Situation in British Columbia, *Int. Soc. Rev.*, Feb., 1910, p. 742.

beyond the party lines into the ranks of the anarcho-syndicalists, they shade, on the other, into the more radical constructivists; the New York Marxists, for example, may be classed with the left in their opposition to the Wisconsin parliamentarians, but are not necessarily apostles of "direct action."

While, as a matter of convenience, names have here been affixed to the various divisions of policy and sympathy among Socialists, it must be borne in mind that the very use of such terms tends unavoidably to a too exact classification and to the hardening into boundaries of what are in reality but shades of difference. The expressions "revolutionist" and "constructivist," therefore, must be taken as representing extreme types, to which few individuals do more than approximate in one or more directions.

CHAPTER XV

THE PRESENT STATUS OF SOCIALISM IN THE UNITED STATES

SOCIALISM in the United States has from the beginning been of slow development, as was brought out in the historical sketch preliminary to this study. The most striking growth in the Socialist vote was in the two years between 1902 and 1904, during which it increased from 223,494 to 409,230,¹ — a strength due partly to the chance vote of the radical Democrats, owing to the conservative character of their presidential candidate at that time. This fact was clearly shown in 1908, when the Socialists labored under a disadvantage in opposing both Bryan, the radical, and Taft, who was expected to inherit the active reform policy of Roosevelt; at this election, notwithstanding the prediction of a million votes, the Socialist total had swelled only to 424,483, and in 1909 the local elections in several states, notably New York, showed a decided loss.²

In Wisconsin alone there has been a steady growth, the vote in Milwaukee mounting from 2400 in 1898 to 15,000 in 1904, 21,000 in 1908, and 27,000 in 1910.

Since 1909, however, there has been another period of striking Socialist advance. In this year the

¹ Hunter, *Socialists at Work*, p. 361.

² S. P. Official Bulletin, May, 1909.

Social Democrats secured control of the city of Milwaukee, and by 1910 had strengthened their representation in the Wisconsin legislature to fourteen, including two state senators. The national election of 1910 increased the Socialist vote to 604,756, — a growth of over 40% since 1908, — and a representative in Congress was for the first time elected. There were Socialists in the legislatures of North Dakota, Minnesota, Pennsylvania, and Massachusetts, and Socialist mayors in seventeen municipalities besides Milwaukee.

The membership of the Socialist Party has grown at a steadier pace than the vote, — from 26,784 in 1906 to 41,751 in 1908, falling to 41,759 in 1909 (chiefly because of internal dissensions in the states of Nebraska, Texas, and Washington), rising again to 58,011 in 1910, and in the first quarter of 1911, reaching a total of 78,000.¹

The Socialist Labor Party reached its highest vote in 1898, of 82,204. These figures fell after the formation of the new party in 1900 to 34,000, rose in 1902 to 53,000, and since that time have steadily declined, from 34,000 in 1904 to 15,000 in 1908.² The membership, in the same way, has gone down from 2500 immediately after the divisions of 1900 to 1498 in 1908, and at present numbers from about 800 to 1000.

During the last few years there has been a popular impression of the strengthening of Socialist sentiment as shown in the attitude of the press, the pulpit, and the university, the labor union and the middle class public. Churches and lecture institutes are

¹ S. P. Official Bulletin, Feb., 1910; Jan., 1911; Report of National Secretary, May 15, 1910.

² Approximate figures.

opening their platforms to Socialist discussion, 37 of the American colleges and universities now offer courses in Socialism, and the labor unions of New York have begun to invite definite coöperation from the Socialist Party.

If the impression of popular interest is correct, a large portion of this new Socialist sentiment must exist as mere sympathy, or else is diverted for opportunistic reasons into channels other than the Socialist parties;¹ for, notwithstanding the Socialist wave of 1910, the fact remains that political Socialism is far weaker in the United States, as regards both votes and membership, than in the various European countries. While in Germany the vote in 1911 reached more than three and a quarter millions, and in France and Austria exceeded a million, the American vote has not yet come near the million mark.²

A partial explanation of the slow growth of the Socialist vote as compared with the party membership is the circumstance that more than 10% of the members are non-voting women, minors, or aliens.³

The membership of the Socialist parties, however, even including these non-voters, embraces a very small percentage of the population. The ultimate cause of the comparative weakness of American Socialism lies doubtless in the peculiar conditions of our society, — the absence of hereditary social classes, with the presence of the Anglo-Saxon spirit of individualism, the early acquisition of political rights, the indirect political system which compels us to vote for men rather than measures, and, most of

¹ Thompson, *op. cit.* p. 10-11.

² Thompson, *The Rising Tide of Socialism*, p. 1.

³ S. P. Official Bulletin, April, 1909.

all, the lateness of industrial development which long kept the land open to the people and deferred the emergence of the labor problem.¹

More immediate causes are to be found in the divided state of organized labor, with its prevailing principle against participation in politics, and in the conditions of the American Socialist Party itself. The organization of the party is unduly cumbersome, sacrificing at many points efficiency to democracy, and it is admitted that the routine work of internal management takes up much energy that would otherwise be devoted to the task, — “agitate, educate, organize.”²

Many individuals of the Socialist Party, moreover, have added to the rigidity of the No Compromise attitude a spirit of sectarianism that has opposed indiscriminately every force outside of itself, while it has held aloof from the concrete problems absorbing the public attention.

The barrenness of effort resulting from the defects just mentioned strengthens the natural dislike of “throwing away one’s vote,” which is always ready to strangle the third party in its cradle, and thus keeps away the support of many Socialist sympathizers.

The requirement of the pledge acknowledging the class struggle and renouncing all connection with other political parties is an additional factor in keeping down the membership of the party, as distinct from the vote. The correspondence of the party press contains frequent protests against this require-

¹ Gilman, *op. cit.*, p. 57, *seq.*

² See correspondence in *Call*, June 8, Aug. 20, Nov. 21, Dec. 26, 1909; Jan. 2, 1910.

ment, and the recent Socialist Party Congress has modified the pledge so as to declare antagonism to all parties formed by the "capitalist," rather than the "propertied" classes.¹ Though apparently slight, this change of wording is an admission of sympathy with organizations of the propertied but non-capitalist middle class, such as the Farmers' Convention, to which a delegate was sent in 1910 by the Socialist Party.²

As indicated by the slight falling off in the membership during 1909, it is probable that internal dissensions are an important cause of the failure of the Socialist Party to expand in the same degree as the parties in Europe.³ In so far as these disputes are based on the natural differentiation between the revolutionist on the left and the constructivist on the right, they are an inevitable accompaniment of any considerable social movement, and are salutary in so far as they keep the party from crystallization. The intellectual-proletarian antagonism, on the other hand, is wholly weakening in its tendency, and, were it not so largely of an artificial character, would seriously threaten American Socialism. The differences as to Marxian doctrine appear to be less a real cause of dissension than a convenient base upon which to found criticism of a tactical opponent, and it is probable that variations in religious belief will tend, in the Socialist Party, as elsewhere, to become softened with the general progress of toleration. Such a liberal spirit is shown in a recent comment by the "ultra-revolutionary" *International Socialist Review* upon a book of Rev. Thomas C. Hall:

¹ N. Y. Call, May 21, 1910.

² S. P. Off. Bull., April, 1910.

³ Ibid, Jan., 1910.

"Doctor Hall is not only a thorough Marxian . . . but he is a scholar as well. . . . Anybody who reads *Social Solutions* will realize that Doctor Hall is best fitted to bridge the differences between the Church progressive and Socialism. He has accomplished a good work and paved the way for a stronger movement toward the great Social Solution — the common ownership of the means of production and distribution." ¹

The problems connected with organized labor, on the other hand, are likely to become rather more serious than at present until the bulk of American unionists decide permanently for one or the other form of organization, and until their political or non-political status is firmly established. The manner in which the latter question is settled is vital to American Socialism, as without the alliance, individual or collective, of the organized workers, it can never hope to rise from a cult to a power.

An element of permanent strength in the Socialist parties is contained in two portions of their membership which temporarily reduce their voting force, — the women and the aliens. The Socialist parties are the only political bodies which admit women under the same terms as men, and if, as is possible, the suffrage is granted to women at a date not far remote, the Socialist Party will already claim the allegiance of an organized body of women. Preparations are already being made for the naturalization of foreign-born Socialist women with a view to that occasion. While the immigrant acquisitions to the Socialist parties are not immediately available for voting pur-

¹ International Socialist Review, April, 1910, p. 943.

poses, these differ from the foreign-born voters of other parties in that many of them are already Socialists, familiar with the program and constitution of an allied party of the International, and sometimes able to contribute valuable training gained in the coöperatives of Belgium, the Socialist politics of France or Germany, or the labor unions of England.

A saving virtue in American Socialism, moreover, is its capacity for self-criticism. For months after the elections of 1909 the party press teemed with answers to the question, — "What is the matter with the Socialist Party?" and very rarely did these letters voice an attempt to charge the disappointment of the polls wholly to external factors.¹ As a result of these criticisms the party in New York instituted important changes in local organization, entered vigorously into constructive work in coöperation with the labor unions, and to some extent took a hint from the Milwaukee Socialists in diverting its efforts from the holding of street meetings to the systematic distribution of literature.

As far as national affairs are concerned, it seems possible for the American Socialists to sink their differences and coöperate when a definite task demands it. In 1900 the various factions that had failed in uniting to form a new party were able to work peacefully together through a presidential campaign, and, although the Labor Party dispute in 1909 threatened again to disrupt the party, the ensuing election for the National Executive Committee was generally accepted as the settlement of the discussion by the voice of the majority. Furthermore, while controversy is frequent as to matters of tactics and relation to

¹ See N. Y. Call, Nov. 14, 17; Dec. 12, 1909; Jan. 16, 1910.

outside organizations, there is, as was shown by previous chapters of this study, a substantial agreement among the factions as to all portions of the national platform with the possible exception of a part of the immediate demands. The two Socialist parties have existed without a "split" for ten years, and, in spite of dissensions, few if any leaders have during that time withdrawn their support.

An illustration of the solidarity of the Socialist Party was afforded by the nominations at the national convention of 1908. Owing to sensational circumstances in the preceding year, a demand had arisen on the part of the revolutionists for the nomination of William Haywood, of the Western Federation of Miners, as President of the United States. The constructivists, on the other hand, had suggested the nomination of the Christian Socialist, Carl Thompson, of Wisconsin. When, however, both sides realized the impossibility of united action with either of these candidates, all divisions of the party rallied to the unanimous nomination of Eugene V. Debs and Ben Hanford, Socialists who had kept free from controversy and retained the loyalty of the party as a whole.¹

The *International Socialist Review*, which led the insurgents in the opposition to the National Executive Committee in 1909, expressed itself thus in an editorial immediately after the election to that body had taken place:

"It is easy to become excited over our varying opinions as to tactics, and to overrate their importance. When all is said, our agreements are of

¹ *International Socialist Review*, June, 1908, p. 730.

vastly more importance than our differences. We believe that the opportunists within the party are working on a mistaken theory and are to some extent misdirecting their strength, but we have not the least desire to wage war on them. Our enemy is capitalism." ¹

The foregoing chapters have endeavored to give a picture of present-day American Socialism, with special reference to the principal Socialist body in the United States, the Socialist Party. As explained at the outset, the study has shared the inconsistencies of its subject, which exists not as a science, but as a rapidly changing popular movement. There has been need to observe not only the essay, but the street propaganda, not only the logical, but the illogical Socialist, provided only he be acknowledged by the party organization.

The inquiry has shown a movement whose doctrine is professedly Marxian and at most points actually so. The explanation of crises by a special overproduction theory has been largely superseded, the expectation of catastrophe materially modified, and the existence of surplus value based more and more upon induction from the facts of industry than upon the Marxian labor theory. The economic interpretation of history, however, and preëminently the class struggle doctrine, constitute the foundation of Socialist teaching in the United States.

American Socialist students, such as Untermann, Boudin, and La Monte, have made contributions to Socialist literature in the shape of translations and apologist discussions of Marx. Others, including

¹ International Socialist Review, Feb., 1910, p. 745.

Hillquit, Spargo, Simons, and Ghent, have interpreted these doctrines, and in some instances have worked out contributions to the Marxian theory by applying them to legal institutions, the ethical and religious concepts, American economic history, and American capitalistic development. Certain of the last-named authors have dealt with Marx's doctrines from the Revisionist point of view; yet the influence of such writers as Bernstein seems here to be felt less in changes of doctrine than in a tendency to avoid prophecies of cataclysm and to neglect as non-essential the pure economics of Marx.

In general, the contributions of America to scientific Socialist literature constitute a comparatively small body, — a circumstance which may be accounted for partly by the youth of the movement. Twenty years ago the Socialism of the United States was in the Utopian stage of Nationalism, and the Socialist Labor Party merely a small cult of foreign-born Marxians. The American economists of the last generation either ignored Socialism with MacVane and Patten, or dismissed it, like Francis A. Walker, with the remark:

“Few of these [Socialist] writers have had either the kind of education or the opportunities for observation which would qualify them to form valuable opinions on such a question.”¹

Unlike the Germans, therefore, who have for forty years been confronted with a scientific literature for and against the Marxian doctrines, Ameri-

¹ First Lessons in Political Economy, p. 224. In his larger works Walker merely touches upon the enlargement of state functions, and does not allude to the theory or demands of Marxian Socialism.

can Socialists have until recently possessed almost a monopoly of knowledge upon the subject, and felt the need of but little close reasoning in worsting opponents who were generally more or less misinformed. The present generation is the first in the United States to give serious attention to the subject of Socialism, and it is only for a short time that there has existed Socialist writing of a grade above that of propaganda.

The tendency of original Marxian thought in America, in any case, is distinctly away from the discussion of theory, Revisionist or the contrary. Socialism, like religion, shares at present the trend of investigation and education toward the concrete and the utilitarian, rather than to the abstract, and the United States has entered upon Socialist activity at a stage when the issue is too vital to give free play to the spirit of pure philosophy.

It is in the field of applied Socialism, at the threshold of which Marx stopped to await the course of economic development, that the present-day Marxian is beginning to work. The ultimate expropriation of the means of production, including the organization of production and distribution, with the problems of assignment of labor, incentive, remuneration, and value, constitutes Socialism proper, to which the Marxian theory is but an introduction and the immediate program but a step. While the Utopians have until recently been the chief creators of this doctrine, a beginning of detailed work has been made by Marxists in these directions, especially in the formulation of plans for the extent and method of expropriation.

We have seen that as a political party American

Socialism possesses a definite organization characterized by discipline, extreme democracy, and internationalism. It promulgates a series of immediate demands, which, while containing most of the currently proposed reforms, include also instalments of actual Socialism; its tactics, distinguished in general by the principle of No Compromise, are guided by those of the German Social Democracy wherever a position of political significance has been attained. While, with the exception of the non-affiliated opportunists and the Socialist Labor Party, the Socialists of the United States form a united body, there are important internal differences in policy, shading from the constructivists on the right to the revolutionists on the left of the Socialist Party. The assertion as to the existence of many varieties of American Socialists is therefore justified only with relation to these many shades of tactical policy, founded usually on corresponding gradations of emphasis upon the idea of catastrophe. In other important points, including allegiance to the Marxian philosophy in general, acceptance of the discipline of the Socialist Party, and assent, with the exception of certain immediate demands, to the national platform, the Socialists of the United States are in mutual accord.

Our study of the facts of present American Socialism is ended. To all whose interest in the subject is a strong one, Socialist and non-socialist alike, there comes the temptation to attempt a forecast of the future. While to the Marxian such a forecast is an integral part of his doctrine, to the non-Marxian such a prognostication here, as generally in affairs dealing with human choice, is a dangerous pastime.

The Marxians teach that the course of economic development in America must sooner or later bring Socialism, and upon the truth or falsity of this claim depends the fate of the Socialist movement in the broad sense of the term. Granting the utmost contention of the Marxians, however, we have no assurance that Socialism may not come after a period of industrial oligarchy, factional anarchy, or violent class conflict, or on the other hand as the result of a slow transformation of the present industrial and political system through non-partisan Socialist influence.

The future of the Socialist parties in the United States must depend not only upon the acceleration or retardation of the general movement through economic development, but upon the influences which may affect their own internal character and that of the older political parties.

In the present somewhat disorganized condition of the Republican and Democratic parties, it is easy to conceive of an alignment of forces that might either enlist on the side of Socialism the power of the radicals, or else range the latter in a new party, relegating the Socialists for an indefinite period to the third or fourth place. Furthermore, the power of organized labor, as has already been indicated, may decide to remain in general non-partisan, to lend its support definitely to one of the old parties or a new radical party in return for services rendered, to organize as a strictly independent labor party, or to accept the oft-repeated invitation to ally itself with the Socialists. Sombart expresses the opinion, in the new edition of his book on Socialism, that the American labor movement is tending more and more in the

last-named direction, and that "It seems pretty probable that Socialism will make rapid strides in America within the next few decades."¹

The policy of the Socialists themselves will doubtless be influential in affecting such party readjustments. If the constructivists continue more and more to shape the Socialist tactics, the labor unionists and extreme radicals among the other parties might find the intervening step less difficult, and join with the working-class party in bringing about the transitional Socialist state; if, on the contrary, the revolutionists should gain the majority among American Socialists, the support of the militant industrial unionists might be held, while the gulf between the Socialists and the reformers would be likely to widen until the inauguration of a real class war.

A certain responsibility as to the future of Socialism in America rests with the cultural institutions of church, press, and university. Hostility on the part of these forces tends in general to weaken the influence of the "intellectuals" and the Christian Socialists, to harden the party organization on the lines of the class struggle, and to render the revolutionist the dominant Socialist type. If the movement is ignored by the higher intellectual forces, on the other hand, there is danger that Socialism, encountering in controversy only the ignorant and unscientific, may rest satisfied with the unrevised economics of the last century and win the support of the people by superficial propaganda and specious promises of a millennium.

The theories of Marxian Socialism have received careful and fruitful attention from economists in

¹ Sombart, *op. cit.*, Revised, p. 278, *seq.*

Europe, and recently in the United States, though few of these studies exist in a form accessible to the American public. The ultimate and immediate demands of Socialism, on the contrary, have, for the most part, been neglected by scientific non-socialists, being left on the one hand to the indulgent criticism of reformers such as Professor Ely and on the other to the unbridled polemics of writers of the type of Mallock and Cathrein. Yet that which calls itself Marxian Socialism, irrespective of its scientific title to that designation, is in the United States laying less and less emphasis upon theory. It is itself not a science, but a popular movement; and is using the doctrines of the class struggle and the economic interpretation of history as a basis for an ultimate program, a series of immediate demands, and a summons of the working class to either constructive or revolutionary action.

Marx, the closet-philosopher of *Capital*, is becoming less and less a factor in American Socialism. Marx, the revolutionist of the *Communist Manifesto* and the opportunist of the *International*, exercises an ever stronger influence upon the rapidly growing American movement. This movement is urging its program and tactics upon the people of the United States; and it is for economic science to test this program and tactics and guide the people in purifying, accepting, or rejecting them.

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